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# LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

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JANUARY 1904.

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## *Nature's Comedian.*<sup>1</sup>

BY W. E. NORRIS.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### LILIAN UNDERSTANDS AT LAST.

'WHAT is going to become of this country I'm sure I don't know!' growled Mr. Ormond, laying down the local newspaper and flicking his glasses impatiently off his nose.

Many decent gentlemen are in a similar state of uncertainty, and few perhaps would deny that the future of England at the opening of a new century is a little difficult to forecast. But the phenomenon which, more than any other sign of the times, staggered Mr. Ormond to the extent of making him feel the solid ground give way beneath his feet was that a man who, despite bygone delinquencies and recent aberrations from conventionality, remained, after all, a Dunville and an inheritor of ancient traditions, should publicly ally himself with Home-rulers, pro-Boers, Socialists and other rapsCALLIONS for whom the gallows provided an ending more honourable than their deserts. To act in such a manner was, according to his notions, a very great deal worse than acting upon theatrical boards, and he never wearied of saying so.

Lilian, to whom his remarks were generally addressed, did not, on her side, show how weary she was of hearing the man whom she loved thus inexorably condemned. She was very

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patient, and, as a rule, very silent, essaying no useless defence and making allowance, too, for an acrimony which might not be as exclusively political as it professed to be. Her father, she knew, would never have relished the idea of her marrying an actor, though he might, after some fuss and expostulation, have ended by accepting even an actor of Harold's name; but he now evidently thought—as everybody else did—that the ex-actor and would-be member of Parliament was in pursuit of Josephine's fortune. Hence a vehemence of language prompted, not improbably, as much by sorrow and commiseration as by wrath. It was as though he had anxiously pleaded, 'You see what he is! You can't surely break your heart for a fellow like that!'

Had a rejoinder been possible, she might have honestly replied that she was neither breaking her heart nor in any fear of being jilted. Notes of warning came to her from more quarters than one; even from Dick, who, in great glee over the virtual acceptance of *Renunciation*, confided this good news to her and at the same time gave utterance to misgivings respecting his brother's career and intentions which were meant, as she quite understood, to prepare her for a shock. Yet her serene faith in one from whom she was temporarily severed by the force of circumstances remained unshaken. Circumstances, to be sure, were not what she could have wished them to be; but no circumstances could do away with the all-important fact that Harold loved her. And, lest anybody should pronounce the girl a downright fool, it may be pleaded for her that she was, after all, right in assuming that to be a fact. Why should anybody be laughed at for taking honourable conduct as a matter of course? One must grow old before one can learn what a queerly incongruous thing human nature is, and by that time one is, or ought to be, past laughing at simplicity.

The process of Lilian's education, however, was not to be much longer delayed. Enlightenment came to her one autumn afternoon when she was overtaken in a lane near her home by Lady Gardiner's cobs, and when her ladyship, who held the reins, pulled up to hail her.

'Haven't seen you for a month of Sundays!' her fat friend called out. 'Now you must come back with me and have a cup of tea, if only to show that difference of political opinion need never alter friendship. Jump in; there's lots of room.'

There could not very well be lots of room for anybody to sit beside Lady Gardiner, although the gentleman who had been

enjoying that privilege, and who now stood, hat in hand, on the road would not, perhaps, have objected to a squeeze. But his offer to walk the rest of the way was accepted without hesitation.

'Yes, you may as well,' the old lady assented. 'Do you good to stretch your legs, and we sha'n't beat you by more than ten minutes or so. I have been exercising the dogs and trotting Mr. Dunville round on visits of ceremony,' she went on explanatorily. 'The idea, I believe, is that he produces a rather more favourable impression upon the well-to-do when he is accompanied by me. They don't so much fancy Josephine, who hustles and bewilders them, though she gets on splendidly, it seems, with farmers and agricultural labourers and that sort.'

Lady Gardiner's incidental coupling of farmers with agricultural labourers gave the measure of her electioneering knowledge; but indeed the part that she had taken in the coming contest was as slight as her interest in it. Harold, holding Lilian's hand and gazing eloquently into her eyes, said as much as could be said in the presence of a third person, but was a shade too apologetic. Surely it was rather for her to offer apologies on her father's behalf than for him to excuse himself on the ground that he had been too tied and bound of late by the chain of his obligations to do anything he wanted to do! Lilian, moreover, despite emphatic assertions to the contrary, had an intuition that he did not really wish her to go to tea at the Manor.

But all this was the affair of a minute. Bowling onwards presently in the low phaeton, with Harold already hidden from view by a turn of the road, she threw off that fugitive suspicion and remarked laughingly to her neighbour:

'I should get into deep disgrace at home if it were known there that I had accepted hospitality from the enemy.'

'Oh, that be bothered!' returned Lady Gardiner easily. 'I'm nobody's enemy; I'm a neutral, if ever there was one, and I washed my hands a long time ago of Josephine and all her works. There's Anne Dunville, who professes to be an antediluvian Tory, and may be one for anything I know or care. She and I don't think of allowing a stupid election to cause any coldness between us.'

Lilian observed that Anne, even if unable to support her brother, would probably not be very sorry if he were to win. 'And he is going to win, isn't he?' she added.

'So they say,' answered Lady Gardiner, talking through a yawn; 'but I am not much in the way of hearing. Captain Desborough is making himself popular, I am told.'

She changed the subject, speaking only of dogs and horses until she reached her own door, when she said abruptly and *à propos* of nothing, 'He isn't much good, you know, that candidate of Josephine's.'

'In what way do you mean?' Lillian asked.

'In no way, my dear. At least, that's my impression of him, which I give you for what it may be worth. Do you remember my telling you when he first came down here that he struck me as being short of something, though I couldn't quite say what? Well, he's short of it still.'

'And are you still unable to say what it is?'

'H'm! I might arrive at a definition perhaps if it were worth while; but why should I take the trouble? I'm neither maid nor widow, so I can't be tempted to marry him. The woman who does marry him won't draw a prize, I suspect; but of course that's her look-out.'

Lady Gardiner waddled towards the library, casting off, as she went, superfluous wraps, which an attendant footman picked up. Josephine, seated comfortably in front of the fire, with a novel in her hand and the tea-table at her elbow, glanced round to say:

'I hope you have had good sport, in the sense of having drawn all your coverts blank.' Then, recognising her mother's companion, she rose, exclaiming, with uplifted brows, 'Hullo, Lil! This is indeed generous and pretty of you! I wasn't sure that we were still upon speaking terms.'

'Some people,' observed Lady Gardiner, while she sank into a deep chair and signalled to the two Schipperkes to establish themselves upon her capacious lap, 'can afford to be generous. Some people know that at least they aren't making themselves publicly absurd with their whims and fancies. Oh, I don't say it to put you out of conceit with your candidate, my dear; I leave that part of the business in his own capable hands. All I mean is that you mustn't credit Lillian with magnanimity; for she doesn't care a brass farthing what freaks any of you indulge in—and quite right too! I overtook her on the road and whisked her into the trap. The candidate follows on his ten toes and ought to be here presently.'

Josephine laughed. Her mother, who often amused her, never put her out of temper, and she herself was not wanting in magnanimity. Perhaps she felt a little sorry for the vanquished rival whose rivalry had never in her eyes been at all formidable; for nothing could have been more friendly or more kind than her

reception of Lilian. She did not on this occasion patronise the girl, but made her sit down by the fireside, complimented her upon her very becoming costume, and hoped that it was not indiscreet to beg for some information about Captain Desborough.

'It isn't every day, you see,' she explained, 'that I get a chance of questioning somebody from the opposite camp, and our own camp stories are not altogether to be relied upon. But by all accounts he must be a decent sort of person.'

It may have been, further, because the truest kindness is sometimes cruel that as soon as Harold made his appearance, Miss Gardiner took some pains to demonstrate the completeness of his allegiance to her. By the familiarity of her address, by interrogative looks and whispered asides, by numerous trifling gestures and changes of voice she compelled him to tell a tale which not even Lilian could fail to read; while he, being ill at ease, played into her hands. The situation, in truth, was not one which lent itself to a display of Harold's peculiar gifts. No one knew better than he how to cajole women; but then he liked to deal with them singly. He could not now venture to run all the risks involved in snubbing Josephine, who would instantly have detected his motive, and whose own motive for behaving as she did he partly guessed; so he saw nothing for it but to accept the part assigned to him and try to look less disconcerted than he felt.

Self-respect, which imposed a similar effect upon Lilian, enabled her, but only just enabled her, to keep a smile upon her lips and the tears from rising to her eyes. The race to which we belong is an ignoble one, composed only in an infinitesimal degree of honourable men and women. Such as it is, the best has to be made of it, and it seems probable that even the worst of human beings are not altogether bad. But not in youth does one arrive at a conclusion so dispassionate or at the species of resigned acquiescence which it entails. The one thing clear to Lilian was that the man whom she loved had deceived her, and if it was likewise clear to her that he loved another woman, this error in diagnosis was doubtless due to the fact that she could not help continuing to love him. Cruelly though she had been treated, she did not set him down as a mere fortune-hunter; which was, for her sake, a pity, inasmuch as, had she done so, she might at once have begun the cure of her malady by despising him. What was immediately requisite was that she should maintain an unconcerned front, and in this she was moderately successful



Conversation went on ; she took her share in it, resolved not to hurry away, though longing for release ; that, as a matter of fact, she betrayed herself both to Josephine and to her kindly old hostess was scarcely her fault, for her secret had been more or less known to them beforehand.

After tea a summons was sent to Sir Joseph, who, it seemed, was anxious to confer with Harold respecting a great meeting which was shortly to be held in the nearest large town, and while the two men were laying their heads together apart over a bundle of papers which the elder had carried in under his arm, Josephine took occasion to make one of those startling remarks upon which her reputation as a person of much originality was based.

'I wonder,' said she to Lilian, 'whether you know how extraordinarily pretty you are. One would suppose that you must if one were not aware that any amount of self-deception as to personal appearance is possible in both directions. However, if you do know, you can't have the heart to quarrel with a monkey-faced, tow-headed creature like me.'

'Quarrel with you?' echoed Lilian, too taken aback to respond with polite contradictions. 'But do I look as if I wanted to quarrel?'

'You do rather, and small blame to you! I am a firebrand in a quiet neighbourhood ; if it were not for me, your Captain Desborough would have a very much better chance than he has, Mr. Dunville would never have come forward, and—things generally would have worked themselves out with a good deal less of storm and stress. Don't quarrel with me, though. Women who haven't beauty are bound to go in for having something else ; but it's no race really. Beauty wins at the finish. Not in every contest, I grant you ; but in almost all that signify.'

'Josephine!' said Lady Gardiner, opening her eyes, which had been closed in incipient sleep.

'Yes?' answered her daughter interrogatively.

'I don't pretend to be half as clever as you are ; but I almost think that, if I were in your place, I should be clever enough to hold my tongue.'

Josephine, with her head slightly inclined to one side, had the air of giving this advice due consideration, and Lilian thought the moment appropriate for rising to take her leave. She had to shake hands with Harold ; but, in doing so, she avoided his eyes, while a long-drawn sigh, which escaped him at the moment, failed to produce its intended effect upon her. 'How gladly I would if



I could! But don't you see that until the election is over I can't?' was what he wished it to signify; but she merely understood him to mean that he had made an unfortunate mistake in fancying that he was in love with her, and that he was sorry for it.

Sir Joseph, who accompanied her into the hall, at first wanted to order a carriage to take her home and then offered her the escort of a servant. When both proposals were laughingly declined, he remarked, in his hurried, hesitating way:

'Yes, yes, young ladies aren't afraid of the dark now; they aren't much afraid of anything, it seems to me. Times have changed since I was young. Although, to be sure,' he added, 'there are some respects in which times never change. The same old story over and over again, isn't it? Men and women want what they can't have and what, nine times out of ten, they wouldn't like if they got it. Nine times out of ten, I do believe. But there are second strings—plenty of second strings, you know. I collect stamps myself.'

He broke off, plucking at his ragged whiskers and blinking nervously. The human sympathy that was in him, though so grotesquely inarticulate, touched Lilian, who, as soon as she was out in the cold night air and could let her tears flow without restraint, felt grateful to two very kind-hearted old people. It was a little humiliating, of course, that the truth should be so manifest to them; but what was that in comparison with the humiliation of having bestowed her love upon a man who was only embarrassed by the gift? Looking back, it seemed to her that she had been insanely, inexcusably mistaken from start to finish. She remembered how Harold had on many occasions exhibited signs of alarm, and accused herself, with burning cheeks, of having made love to him against his will. No doubt he had been attracted by her, and he had said the sort of things to her which men do say to girls by whom they happen to be attracted, but which only idiots take seriously. And now it was almost certain that he must know what even Sir Joseph and Lady Gardiner had so easily discovered! So she stumbled along the dark lanes, a most woe-begone little person, to whom the possible existence of 'second strings' might well seem an ironical form of comfort. Yet, had she but known it, Miss Josephine Gardiner had unintentionally done her a very real service, while Harold himself, with equal lack of intention, was to render her a still greater one in the sequel.

Harold, meanwhile, was not at all pleased either with himself

or with Josephine. He hated always to have his hand forced, and although, at the point to which matters had come, it seemed an indispensable part of the programme that he should eventually marry Miss Gardiner, he thought it very ungenerous of her to lay his intentions bare under Lilian's eyes, as she had done. Sir Joseph did not return to the library, and when Lady Gardiner had fallen sound asleep, with dropped jaw, he interrupted a rapid checking off of doubtful voters whom Josephine believed that she had lately converted to ask:

'Doesn't it sometimes strike you that we may be counting our chickens before they are hatched?'

'When you say "we," she returned, scrutinising him rather sharply, 'do you allude to me and to yourself in particular?'

He nodded: 'Just so; to you and me.'

'Oh! Then all I can say is that you had better not speak for me until you know what chickens I expect. Disappointment, anyhow, wouldn't leave me without plenty of compensations and alternatives. But as for you, you have just *got* to hatch this brood! You are past the parting of the ways; you can't indulge any longer in the drifting that is so dear to you—'

'How do you know that drifting is dear to me?'

'As if you didn't betray your love for it at every turn! It is true that you also betray your talents at every turn, which makes some amends. However, as I was saying, you can't afford to lose heart. If you don't carry the election, where are you?'

'Where indeed!'

'Carry it, then. You can, if you choose to exert yourself, and when once that has been accomplished you may go far. I think myself that you will go a very long way; for Parliaments, and even Ministries, are made up of ordinary men, and you are not an ordinary man. You only want a start to forge ahead of your competitors in a few strides.'

What utter nonsense this was he did not for the moment perceive, his ears being too agreeably tickled by her flattery for analysis of it. He reverted to his accustomed good humour, dismissed Lilian from his mind (half thankful for, half provoked at, Josephine's superb superiority to jealousy), and—

'Don't dig the spurs into me,' he pleaded, laughing; 'I assure you I'm running for all I'm worth. You know why I'm running at all.'

'I hope I do,' she returned; 'I hope I have managed to imbue you with ambitions which ought to stand in no need of

spurring. I am not sure,' she went on meditatively, 'whether you meant to say a rather impertinent thing or not just now, when you accused me of counting my chickens before they were hatched; but, if you did, it was foolish of you. You had better not do it again.'

He made the reply that she expected him to make, for she had, to a great extent, if not altogether, taken his measure long ago. On the other hand, he had not taken hers with anything like sufficient accuracy to venture upon a less subservient tone than he adopted; and thus he missed an opportunity of considerably augmenting her interest in, as well as her affection for, him.

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### HOW NOT TO DO IT.

As the date of the election grew near the spirits of Captain Desborough's supporters brightened. Victory they scarcely ventured to anticipate, in the face of many adverse circumstances and forces; but they were going, they hoped, to run the rival candidate close. Desborough was a cheery, energetic fellow, still young, and possessed of a knack of ingratiating himself with his hearers which Mr. Dunville, though a far better speaker, seemed somehow to lack. Then, too, there was a perceptible instinctive feeling throughout the electorate (fostered, of course, by Harold's opponents) that a Radical Dunville must be something of a renegade. His principles and his programme probably appealed to the majority, who happened to have local, as well as national, reasons for dissatisfaction; yet it was evident that they had no great liking for him as an individual, and that without the Gardiners he would have had little chance of inducing some of them to vote for him.

Just before the nomination day Harold took up his quarters at an hotel in the principal town—the Rectory being, as he and his friends felt, no longer a befitting place of sojourn for him—and immediately afterwards it became his duty to address the largest Liberal gathering that had as yet been called together. He was a little nervous when, on the appointed evening, he walked across to the public building which had been engaged for the purpose, but not very; for he had his speech at his fingers'

ends, and Sir Joseph Gardiner, who, with other influential personages, accompanied him, scented triumph in the air. Hitherto their orator, talking for the most part to stolid rustics, had had scant occasion of doing himself justice; but now they were presenting him to a better-educated, more intelligent audience, and reporters from the London newspapers were waiting to take down his winged words. He might at least be expected to produce a more serious impression upon serious people than Captain Desborough, who, on the previous evening, had delivered a sort of familiar schoolboy harangue, and had wound up by calling upon the assemblage to sing 'Rule, Britannia.'

While a way was being forced for Harold through the densely crowded hall, he caught sight, not a little to his dismay, of a very smartly dressed lady who nodded and waved her hand to him. He had the presence of mind at once to stretch out his own, for Miss Fitzwalter, whose eyes were glittering, was better conciliated than ignored in moments of excitement, and he could not imagine what had brought her down from London. Holding her hand he smilingly inquired, and in half-defiant accents she replied:

'Well, as this isn't a packed meeting, I'm entitled to attend it, I suppose; so I thought I would gratify my curiosity. It's always pleasant and instructive to see you in a new part.'

'Awfully good of you to take such a lot of trouble to witness such a poor performance,' Harold rejoined; 'but I wish you had told me you were coming, instead of making your way in with this beastly crowd. Of course, you must join us on the platform now.'

It was adroit of him to meet her in that spirit, and he could see that she was pleased. Whether Sir Joseph, whom he hastened to introduce to her, was pleased was another question, and what Josephine, already seated on the platform with the very few local ladies who represented Liberalism, thought of the new arrival was yet another; but no alternative course had seemed safe to him. At least Lorna, in her present position, would have to behave herself, whereas in one of greater freedom and less responsibility goodness only knew what she might not have done or shouted!

Dimly, amidst the cheers called forth by his appearance and the hearty greeting accorded to him by his supporters, Harold became aware that a chair had been found for Miss Fitzwalter at

Josephine's elbow and that a somewhat animated conversation was taking place between the neighbours; but it is difficult to do more than one thing at a time, and he had to concentrate his attention upon the task immediately in hand. Introductory remarks from Sir Joseph, delivered in the simple but telling style habitual to that old hand, were very well received, as was also the candidate, when he advanced to the front of the platform. His exordium, which had been carefully prepared, produced a favourable impression, and his condemnation of the existing Ministry seemed to command the assent of the audience; but before he had proceeded much farther, various interruptions warned him of the presence of a hostile section. Some laughter, for instance, was provoked when, at the end of a well-turned period, a loud-voiced person called out from the body of the hall:

'You've missed your way, guv'nor; theatre's t'other side o' the square!'

'If,' retorted Harold, 'my friend imagines that I am ashamed of having been an actor, he is much mistaken. I yield to no man in my respect for the dramatic profession, and I may add that to my mind all methods of earning a livelihood are honourable.'

The clapping of Lorna's hands behind him scarcely made amends for a prompt rejoinder of 'Devil doubt you!' from his unabashed assailant or for a renewed outburst of guffaws. He went on with his speech and acquitted himself creditably, upon the whole, sometimes disregarding jeers, sometimes replying to them with perfect good humour; but he did not once, and he knew very well that he did not, contrive to get upon terms of sympathy with those who listened to him. His discouragement, although he was able to conceal it, was profound; he felt that his oratory, notwithstanding its ease and polish, did not, somehow, 'come off'; that rude preliminary criticism struck him as precisely hitting the mark. He had mistaken his way; he was a comedian, not a platform speaker; he was attempting something which was perhaps easy enough in itself, but for which he was qualified neither by nature nor by training. He was, moreover, rendered uncomfortable by consciousness that two women whom he had not at all desired to bring together were whispering to one another at his back. What were they talking about? There were so many things that he would rather they didn't talk about!

Mr. Harold Dunville's speech, as reported in the papers of the following morning, read excellently. It certainly conveyed no idea of having been a failure, nor was it exactly a failure; yet

those who were present in the hall had to acknowledge to themselves that it fell a little flat. To experienced observers it was plain that the audience were prejudiced rather against than in favour of the candidate by his name and by the local associations belonging thereto. Radicals themselves, they could not without distrust accept a Dunville as holding Radical views, and one or two significant intercalations betrayed their suspicion that he was an adventurer. Possibly he was too glib, possibly he did not appear to be sufficiently in earnest. It is always hard to say what will or what will not cause a large assemblage to 'take to' a rhetorician; but the signs of their not having taken to him are unmistakable, even when they cheer and rattle their sticks and umbrellas on the floor, as they did when Harold resumed his seat.

Sir Joseph Gardiner extended a limp hand and said, in level accents which betrayed disappointment, 'I congratulate you, Mr. Dunville; you expressed yourself with great lucidity.'

Josephine was more frank and less polite. 'A most excellent lesson in the art of how not to do it!' she exclaimed impatiently, while Harold helped her to put on her jacket. 'Anybody who can manage to pick holes in you or your performance will have to be a clever man; and I suppose that is why everybody was so visibly bored. I myself should have been bored to the verge of tears if it hadn't been for Miss Fitzwalter's conversation, which was most amusing and—informing. Please do not bother about seeing me off, but go and eat. If you are half as hungry as I am you must be faint for want of food. After all, nothing consoles one for the sacrifice of one's dinner, does it? Nothing, anyhow, that one is in the least likely to get, it seems.'

Harold, making no rejoinder, refrained from following her immediately, as she descended from the platform. He was a good deal nettled, and he was also desirous of having a few words with Lorna, whose smile increased his irritation.

'I wonder,' said he, with an intonation which Lorna knew from of old and which never failed to frighten her, 'in what way you contrived to make your talk with Miss Gardiner so informing. There are, of course, lots of things which you may have mentioned to her, and which it would have been very amiable and helpful on your part to mention.'

'I didn't!' the poor woman protested, her smile fading and quick tears rising into her eyes; 'I give you my word I didn't! I only told her that we were old friends, and that we had always acted together, and—and all that. Don't be angry with me!



You must know, surely, that I wouldn't for the world do you an injury, even if I could.'

Harold jerked up his shoulders. 'Then all I can say is that your object in coming here to-night seems rather obscure.'

'I came,' Miss Fitzwalter confessed, in one of those truthful outbursts which were not uncommon with her, 'because I wanted to see for myself how the land lay. I wasn't satisfied with what you told me in London; you tell me so little! Oh, I'm distrustful and suspicious, I own; you know best whether I haven't some right to be. But as far as Miss Gardiner is concerned, my mind is at ease, and I sha'n't trouble you with any more intrusions like this. Harold——'

'Well?'

'If you think she is serious, you are making a mistake. She isn't! To her you are only a new toy, and I am not sure that you aren't already a broken toy. You certainly will be unless you are elected, and my own impression is that you are not going to be elected.'

'Thank you very much indeed,' returned Harold. 'Considering that I have staked everything upon the result of the election, your prophecies and your evident wishes are encouraging in the highest degree.'

'Would it be wonderful that I should wish you to be sent back to me—to us? But I do honestly wish you success. When have I ever wished anything else for you? I only warn you that Miss Gardiner isn't serious. Some day, perhaps, you will recognise who your real friends are.'

The above dialogue was carried on in a surging, swaying crowd. It was brought to an end at this point by the involuntary separation of the parties to it, who were swept asunder as they drew near the entrance of the hall, and presently Harold found himself once more at Josephine's elbow. With one foot on the step of her phaeton, she was bidding a knot of bare-headed bystanders good-night.

'My father?' Harold heard her say. 'Oh, I'm sure I don't know. Gone home in the brougham, I should think. At any rate, I'm not going to wait for him or anybody else in this cold wind.'

The cobs, who had no doubt been kept waiting a good deal longer than they liked, appeared to share her sentiments. With staring coats and ears laid back, they stamped and fidged until the groom left their heads, when with one consent they sprang

forward, dragging the reins through their driver's fingers. They had broken into a gallop before she could get them in hand, and were charging across the market-place, scattering the crowd right and left. Shouts and shrieks arose on every side; one man was caught by the pole and sent flying. The groom, left standing upon the pavement, ejaculated stupidly, 'Good Lord!' and off went Harold at the top of his speed in pursuit.

It was bad luck for him that he was unable to overtake the vanishing equipage, but worse luck still that it should have fallen to another's lot to effect a rescue which could not but evoke the applause of the populace. For who should be standing upon the steps of the Conservative Club, as Miss Gardiner was whirled helplessly by, but Captain Desborough, R.N. And by whom was the tradition of being ever ready to succour beauty in distress more sure of maintenance than by that handy man? Captain Desborough, strong in the arms and as active as a cat, boarded the phaeton in a hop, skip, and a jump (somewhat uncereemoniously displacing its occupant), and, when once he had got a firm grip of the reins, the cobs, who were only fresh and out of temper, not really frightened, made prompt surrender.

'I beg your pardon,' Captain Desborough said, as soon as he had brought them to a standstill; 'I'm afraid I must have given you no end of a dig in the ribs with my elbow, didn't I? But there wasn't much time, you see. You might have fouled a lamp-post and been shot out, head first, at any moment.'

He was a pleasant-looking fellow, with a broad, smooth-shaven face, clear eyes, and white teeth. Josephine, who took a fancy to him at once, thanked him very heartily for his timely assistance.

'And I can't,' she was pleased to add, while she readjusted her hat, 'regret this John Gilpin exhibition of mine, since it has been the means of making us acquainted. Enemies though we are, it won't be possible for you to cut me now, after having saved me from being smashed up, will it?'

Captain Desborough replied in the style that was to be expected of a gallant (in every sense of that adjective) officer, and when Harold arrived, panting, upon the scene, the first thing that he heard was his opponent's willing acceptance of an invitation to luncheon at Dunville Manor on the morrow. Harold himself was not over and above graciously received. He was requested not to 'make a fuss,' although he had made none; his offer to drive Miss Gardiner home was declined without hesitation and without thanks; his denunciations of the groom's clumsiness

in having left the horses' heads too soon were interrupted by a curt 'Oh! it was nobody's fault but my own. Stand clear, please.'

Then, as her servant had by this time come running up, and had climbed into his seat, away went Josephine, with a parting smile and wave of the hand which were obviously not meant for the Radical candidate.

The two political rivals, thus left face to face, could do no less than exchange civil greetings, while one of them thought himself bound to say something complimentary and appreciative to the other. The whole scene had, of course, been witnessed by a large number of spectators, some of whom raised a cheer in honour of Captain Desborough, and presently Harold started to walk back to his hotel, feeling that an evening which had opened inauspiciously had come to an almost disastrous conclusion.

That local Conservative journalism would make the most that there was to be made out of the above episode was only what might have been foreseen; but it was certainly most unfair to describe it as it was described for the benefit of readers the next morning. Under the rather offensive heading of 'SPLENDID PLUCK! OUR FUTURE MEMBER SAVES THE LIFE OF A RADICAL LADY,' an account was given of Josephine's mishap which not only magnified the heroism displayed by Captain Desborough on the occasion, but more than insinuated that Mr. Dunville had shown himself the reverse of a hero. Mr. Dunville, it appeared, had not cared to attempt the risky leap so successfully accomplished by his adversary; he had confined himself to running after the runaways, and had, as a not unnatural result, been distanced. 'May we not regard this in the light of an omen that he will be left equally far behind in another contest which awaits decision? Mr. Dunville's somewhat colourless address to his supporters last night seems to confirm the impression we have had all along of him, that his heart is but faintly in his work. Where his heart may be we do not pretend to say; but he may take our word for it that nothing worth winning in this world is ever won by lukewarmness or timidity. Were it our business or our desire to offer sound advice to this singular scion of a good old Tory stock, we should recommend him to take a leaf out of his opponent's book. *Fas est ab hoste doceri!*'

It was with the echo of these spiteful remarks in his memory that Harold drove out to Dunville Manor—being careful, of course, to defer his visit until an hour at which lunching guests

might be expected to have taken their departure. He went thither prepared for a snubbing reception; so that he was agreeably surprised to find Josephine quite good humoured. She had been enjoying herself very much, she told him, with Captain Desborough, whose breezy talk had been the more pleasant to listen to because he had candidly owned in the course of it that he did not anticipate victory.

'He says it is two to one on us, and I should think he is about right. All the same, you were horribly disappointing last night, with your platitudes and your admirable elocution. You almost made me despair of you.'

'I am afraid,' said Harold, 'I must plead guilty to having done my best.'

'Do your worst, then, next time, and you will obtain more satisfactory results. Of course these people don't know what to make of the sort of thing that you and Miss Fitzwalter consider your best. Miss Fitzwalter, by the way, seems to think of you in superlatives. May I ask whether you mean to let her go on following you about?'

'I most sincerely hope she won't,' Harold answered; 'but how was I to prevent her from turning up at a public meeting?'

'Not knowing precisely how you stand with her I can't say; only she struck me as having the elements of a possible encumbrance in her. Deeply enamoured of you and flatteringly disposed to be jealous of me, she gave me to understand.'

'She gave you to understand that!'

'Oh, not of set purpose; but her sentiments were rather thinly veiled. You may thank me for having preserved you from a scene which I am sure you wouldn't have liked by intimating that I didn't think much of you. As a matter of fact, I did *not* think much of you at the moment; so my task was easy. Ah, and that reminds me that she made me think ever so much more highly of you by mentioning that you had written an extremely clever play, which is to be produced soon. Why have you kept that achievement dark all this time?'

'Perhaps I shouldn't have kept it dark,' answered Harold, 'if I could have guessed that I should go up in your esteem by announcing it.'

'Oh, you go up immensely!—quite immensely! You know my opinion of actors, especially English actors; but to be able to write a play is—well, it is to be somebody. Tell me all about it at once.'

He told her something about it, while she listened with unfeigned interest, nodding at intervals and putting in brief, approving comments, as though she had been a skilled judge of such matters. He omitted to divulge the authorship of the play, covering this suppression of the truth and quieting his conscience by the remark that it was all more or less of a secret for the present. The important thing just then was that he should recover ground with Miss Gardiner which he had evidently lost, and, since she chose to offer him this somewhat irrelevant method of so doing, he gladly profited by it. It likewise occurred to him as opportune to take this occasion of stating how anxious he was to obtain Miss Fitzwalter's professional collaboration.

'I don't want to offend her, you see, and that was why I took the liberty of bringing her on to the platform and introducing her to you,' he explained. 'Actresses are always apt to be umbrageous, and she is worse than most of them in that way, though in others she is a good creature. Of course what you said just now about her being enamoured of me is all nonsense.'

'I should have thought you would have discovered by now that I never talk nonsense. She is unquestionably in love with you, if it mattered—which it doesn't. It might have mattered if you had been at all in love with her; but that seems to come scarcely within the limits of possibility. You had better warn her off, though, unless you have already done so.'

Thus superbly did Miss Gardiner dispose of one whose claims upon Harold's gratitude and affection were somewhat more deeply rooted than she imagined. Waving the subject aside, she turned to that of practical policy.

'You will have to alter your style, which is altogether too literary. You want to use shorter sentences, hit hard when you get the chance, and drop that air of good-tempered superiority. Although I shouldn't wonder if the events of last night had cost you some votes, we have still a margin to draw upon, I believe. Only it won't do to make any more mistakes.'

Harold listened and laughed a little and promised obedience. 'Stick to me,' said he, 'and you will pull me through. I rely, as I have done from the outset, exclusively upon your good offices.'

*(To be continued.)*

## *Marine Steam Turbines.*

**H**OWEVER far we look back into the vistas of the past we see man as a mechanic, and we find that in proportion to his proficiency in mechanics was his advance in civilisation. There is no exception to this rule, which applies even to the time when primal man emerged from the caves in which he had found shelter for an entire geological period, and commenced his struggle with the elements and his natural enemies. Wild animals, or animals wilder than himself, took their toll without stint off him and his progeny, temperature was largely a matter over which he had no control, and bacteria found him as easy a prey as did the beasts. To enter upon such a struggle, unprotected as he was by natural weapons, offensive and defensive, he had to manufacture artificial arms or perish. The birds and beasts he mastered or exterminated by means of his inventions; by scientific diagnosis he carried the war into the camp of preventable disease; and after millenniums of experiment he has chained the elements to his chariot-wheels. In this most strenuous struggle the first necessity man encountered, one with which he is still grappling, was to move himself and his merchandise from place to place with the least possible expenditure of physical energy, and at the greatest possible speed. He was gifted by grudging Nature with a means of terrestrial locomotion inferior to that of the horse, in natural navigation he is not comparable with the otter, and of unaided flight he has not the bare possibility. Transit was therefore the first, or among the first, of the problems to which he addressed himself in earnest. He hastened slowly, however, in its solution; but when we think of the vast ages it took him to discover that the stone axe or arrow was more effective on an enemy's or a neighbour's skull when ground to an edge, we need not wonder at his leisurely progress with machinery; nor would this introduction have been imposed on the reader save for the purpose of accentuating one of the most curious facts in mechanical evolution.

It is a trite reflection which contrasts the extraordinary



erudition of the ancients in philosophy with their childlike ignorance of applied science, one for which, like every other natural phenomenon, there is a very simple natural cause and explanation. It does not, however, concern us in this article. But it is a startling physiological and even psychological puzzle to reflect that centuries before the catapult and battering-ram had ceased to represent a siege-train, before sails had to any general extent taken the place of oars, the principle of marine propulsion, which is now expected to work a revolution in the navigation of the twentieth century, had really been discovered. Yet this is so; although few who read of the wonderful speeds achieved by the turbine steamboats some years ago, or read to-day of the world-wide interest which is centred on this development of the steam-engine, and the experiments, so far undeniably successful, which have been made with it, may realise that the inventor of the steam turbine lived in the second century B.C. Had that invention been used as we can conceive it to have been used, what a tremendous impetus would have been given to the slow march of civilisation! Hero of Alexandria, whose toy was invented, however crudely it was made, on the principle which it is believed will, in the near future, run all the high-speed shipping of the world, affords a powerful illustration of the uselessness of being too far ahead of one's own time. In recent history we have numberless examples of the futility, and not seldom fatality, of being even a century too advanced, and we can realise therefrom the impotent position of the Egyptian philosopher who was no less than two thousand years too enlightened for his period. He was not, so far as I am aware, burnt, beheaded, or tortured to death, in any of the regulation forms of the technical education of the ancients, so his invention at least did not bring any disaster upon him. It was not, it is true, a very fearsome contrivance, and it would have been difficult to associate it with evil spirits of any mythology. Mr. Robert M. Neilson describes it as follows in his admirable book on *The Steam Turbine*:<sup>1</sup>

‘We find a reaction steam-engine mentioned by the Egyptian philosopher Hero in his book on *Pneumatics* written in the second century B.C. This engine consisted of a hollow sphere rotating on two trunnions, through one of which it received steam from a generator situated below the sphere. The sphere was provided with two opposite projecting arms at right angles to the axis of the trunnions, the arms being furnished each

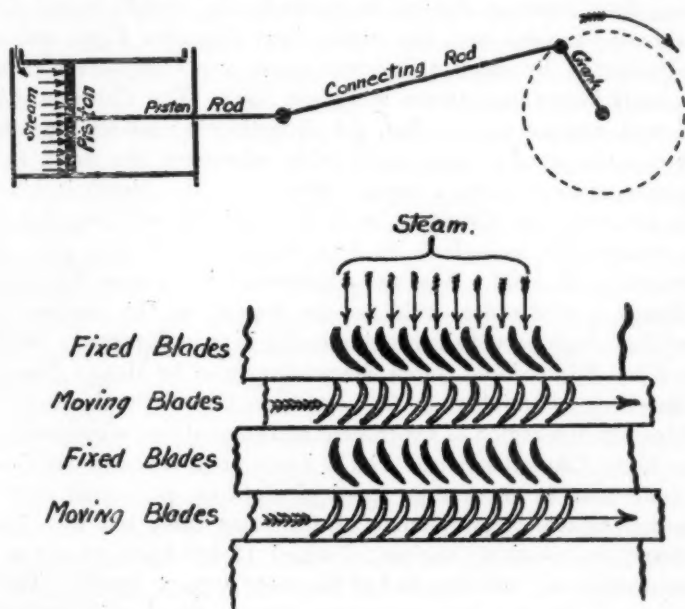
<sup>1</sup> Second edition. London: Longmans, Green, & Co. 10s. 6d. net.

with a nozzle at right angles to the arms and to the plane containing the arms and the trunnions. The nozzles were pointed in opposite directions and the steam which escaped by them from the sphere caused the rotation of the latter about the trunnions.'

The first steam turbine was considered of such slight importance, Hero's invention had no imitators or successors for many hundred years, and when it next appeared in history it had not risen much in the world, being employed in the humble occupation of a turnspit. This was late in the sixteenth century, and early in the next Giovanni Branca gave the turbine a good push on its way by inventing a wheel with vanes or blades on which steam acted in the same way as in the modern engine, only, of course, much less efficiently. Many famous men in the annals of engineering tried their best to help the new engine on the narrow way by which evolution walks or crawls. Its development was slow but sure, until at last the Hon. Charles Algernon Parsons in England, Dr. Gustaf De Laval on the Continent, and Mr. C. G. Curtis in America triumphantly ushered it into the sphere of practical mechanics. They represent the turbine in its most efficient forms, and the latest and most successful types of engine go by their names. Mr. Parsons will always be remembered as the man who adapted it to marine propulsion, the ultimate results of which are at present an object of keen speculation to every marine engineer in the world.

As to the actual principle of the turbine and the advantages which are claimed for it over the reciprocating or ordinary piston engine, with its cumbrous mechanism of cranks, connecting rods, valve-gear, &c., with which every one is familiar, it does not require the technical education of a professional expert to understand the main essentials. In the reciprocating engine great masses of metal have to be set in motion by the steam, stopped at a certain point, restarted in a backward motion, only to be stopped again, and started again as before; in other words, *inertia* and *momentum* have to be encountered and overcome at every stroke of the piston. The least informed in engineering knowledge can therefore perceive that this perpetual starting and stopping, necessary in this type of engine, is a serious limitation to its efficiency owing to the tremendous waste of power inherent in its principle. Now, in the turbine the steam acts directly and continuously on oblique blades, some fixed to a revolving shaft, and others to the stationary portion of the engine encasing it. The action of the steam on these blades or vanes is much the

same as that of the water in an ordinary turbine, or, as a rough illustration, inversely to the action of the propeller. A further and more exact illustration may be found in the rotation of the propeller when a ship is being launched. The motion of the vessel conveys a relative movement to the water, which, acting on the blades of the screw, whirls it round on exactly the same principle that the steam gives a rotary motion to the shaft on which the oblique vanes are fixed. In this way continuous action is achieved, there are no dead centres, and no loss of power such as is suffered through the *inertia* and *momentum* of the



reciprocating parts. It has been claimed, indeed, for the turbine that the whole of the energy of the steam is converted into useful work down to the last pound; but, while this testimonial demonstrates the enthusiasm which the engine has aroused, it is against a fundamental principle in applied mechanics. There are many other advantages in the new engine, but they are of a more strictly technical nature, and unsuitable for discussion in these pages. The rough diagram given above may help to explain the essential difference between the application of steam power in the two types of engine. It may be enough to add, on this phase of the subject, that the turbine, at least for marine propulsion,

is as yet really on its trial, notwithstanding that an excellent start has been made with it and many very encouraging results obtained. If its practical efficiency can be brought up to its theoretical merits, a triumphant success is assured for it before many years will have passed.

When the turbine first went to sea it made a sensation which will not soon be forgotten. Mr. Parsons's first venture, the *Turbinia* developed a speed far exceeding that of any other vessel afloat. On her trial a speed of thirty-four and a half knots was reached when pushed, and thirty-one knots was no trouble to her. This, however, did not long remain the world's record, for the second turbine boat, the torpedo-boat destroyer *Viper*, rather easily beat it, by going, at her best speed, over thirty-seven knots or nearly forty-three statute miles per hour. The *Cobra*, which followed, was not quite so fast, but altogether it is not too much to say that the speed of these boats fairly astonished the world and stimulated to a marked degree interest in the steam turbine. The last boat, the *Cobra*, it must be admitted, also established an undesirable precedent by foundering in a heavy gale on September 18, 1901. She was constructed by another firm, but although the disaster could not be charged to the engines, it must have been very disheartening to the Parsons Company. With the *King Edward* and *Queen Alexandra*, built by Messrs. Denny & Brothers, of Dumbarton, for service on the Clyde, the turbine engine left the region of experiment and entered that of commerce. The *King Edward* steamed 12,116 knots on a coal-consumption of 1429 tons at an average speed of eighteen and a half knots. Another typical river steamer of the same class, but with the ordinary reciprocating engines, steamed 12,106 knots on a coal-consumption of 1900 tons and at the same average speed.<sup>1</sup> That speaks well for the first passenger steamer fitted with turbine engines. Quite recently the turbine has been more widely adopted and is giving satisfaction. Two new cross-Channel steamers, built by Messrs. Denny for the Dover and Calais and the Newhaven and Dieppe routes, are turbine-engined. At present a large steamer is on order for the Union Shipping Co. of New Zealand, one for the Larne and Stranraer service, two for the new Belfast and Heysham route, and a new Allan liner is being built by Messrs. Workman, Clark, & Co., Ltd., of Belfast. This vessel is worthy of special note as the first Transatlantic turbine steamer, and it will no doubt have an influence on the deliberations of the Cunard commission which is now considering the advisability of adopting the

<sup>1</sup> This is a contrast between turbine and piston engine.

engine in the two new liners that company has in contemplation. The order for another Allan liner, also turbine-engined, has been placed with Messrs. Alexander Stephen & Sons, Ltd., of Glasgow. Both these vessels will be 500 feet long and have a speed of seventeen knots. At the moment of writing, it is reported that Messrs. Sivewright, Bacon, & Co., of West Hartlepool, have placed an order for two or three cargo turbine steamers, the hulls to be built by Messrs. Furness, Withy, & Co., of West Hartlepool, while Messrs. Richardsons, Westgarth, & Co. supply the machinery under licence from Messrs. Parsons. These vessels will create a good deal of attention, as they will be the first ordinary cargo turbine steamers.

While the turbine has thus been advancing steadily, if not, so far, very rapidly, on its commercial career, it has been making its way in other directions. Already the British Navy has been represented among its patrons by the cruiser *Amethyst* and the destroyers *Velox* and *Eden*. The American Navy Department is asking Congress for a grant to experiment with the engine in a 5000-ton gunboat. Germany is employing it in a sea-going torpedo-boat and a small cruiser, the *Merkur*, of 10,000 h.p. France is also moving in the matter, and other Governments will no doubt soon fall into line. Private owners, at the same time, are introducing the turbine into the yachting world, where it has already established itself by the fine yachts *Tarantula*, *Emerald*, and *Lorena*, owned respectively by Messrs. Vanderbilt, Gould, and Barber. These have proved very satisfactory, and another, the *Revolution*, may be mentioned as the first American-built turbine boat. It is naturally engined with the Curtis turbine, which is now being built in very large sizes for electric power plants.

The question of economy admits of a difference of opinion, although the evidence of the *King Edward* is favourable to the turbine. In addition to a smaller proportionate coal-consumption, there is the upkeep of the engines to be considered, and here the turbine undoubtedly has the advantage. Besides, the small space occupied by the latter affords a great saving, and there is a further and very important economy of deck space, as there are no huge engine casings to encumber it; while increase of speed, steadiness of motion, and almost complete absence of vibration make up the case for the new engine. The speed which may be developed seems to have no fixed limits, so the dream of the enthusiasts who aspire to cross the Atlantic from Narragansett Bay to Berehaven in ninety hours, or only three and three-quarter days of open sea, may before long be an accomplished fact.

ROBERT CROMIE.

## *The King's Nose.*

IT was the eve of the *fête* of the great king, who, though he had been dust for a generation, was still honoured in Mittenberg as the embodiment of a glorious past. His colossal statue in the centre of the chief square was surrounded by a scaffolding, from which a ladder was reared against the summit. This was to enable workmen in the dark hours of the morning to adjust laurels on the august brow.

The town was in holiday mood. Love and spring were abroad in the April-sweet air, and, from beneath the garden hedges, violets wafted the odours that quicken memory and hope. Every Jack had his Jill with him or, if not, seemed hurrying to find her.

Of those bent on this errand there were four who, from different points, were converging on one house.

The nearest to it was an Englishman, roughened and broadened by some years of Colonial life. The next was his countryman and cousin, a well-groomed wanderer from Mayfair, precociously calm and keen. The other two were noblemen attached to the Court, who having, as usual, left their quarters behind the *Residenz* at the same hour, were to meet in front of it, and thence, taking different routes, were to encounter once more, with mutual loss of countenance, at the door of the Desired One.

This magnetic door had not originally been designed to admit gallants. It gave entrance to a vast building whose function was to house girl-workers respectably at rather less than cost price, and for these the regulations were strict; but the occupants of the rooms on the first floor paid long rents and enjoyed corresponding privileges. Being for the most part heretics and foreigners, they were exempt from priestly supervision, and were even allowed the visits of secular males. Along this corridor silk skirts swept forth to the theatre, and the echo of spurred heels was not infrequent.



It was to a little room at the end that the Colonial was making his way. From the woman who lodged there he had parted seven years before with vows which he was now come to fulfil; and, instead of the foreign street, he saw the elms of an English garden, and a girl with wistful eyes whose farewell tears had kept his heart green ever since.

The destination of the other men was the *salon* just before this. It was furnished in American taste, and there a roguish and very lovely young girl stood smiling at her reflection in a pier-glass. She wore a princess gown of the period, the demure colour of which heightened her astonishing bloom; the old-gold of the fan-girdle was repeated in her braided hair.

This young person was Althea Gray, a student at the *Musikschule*. But though by way of studying professionally, she did not, in forecasting her future, exclude the likelihood of a matrimonial deviation; whilst her mother, who sat watching her at the moment with shrewd, unimpassioned eyes, reckoned the deviation a certainty, and was anxious for its speedy and brilliant accomplishment.

'You're just what I was at your age,' she remarked. 'We blossom young in our family—too young, for the sooner a woman blossoms, the sooner she fades. You'll be homely, Althea, before you're twenty.'

Althea was familiar with her mother's tactics.

'Now, mother, that's real mean! I'll marry when I've a mind to, and not a day before.' And, still smiling, she tied on an apron—one of the white embroidered trifles that had a drawing-room vogue in the earlier days of afternoon tea.

She was considering its folds when an older woman, flushed and rather untidy in dress, entered, and advanced to her with a sheet of manuscript music, the ink on which was still wet.

Althea glanced it over. 'A love song, Mary! Let's hear it.' And she skipped across to the piano.

The composer listened nervously at first. Then, as Althea's fresh young voice and skilled fingers gave the rapture out clearer and clearer, a great exaltation filled her eyes. At the close she sank into a chair, and Althea, jumping up from the piano stool, curtsied to her.

'Mary Grove, you're a real, big genius, but '—and she planted herself before the mirror again—'it's just as good, and better, to be pretty.'

This implied criticism of her appearance caused the poor

genius to wince, and as she had composed the song with the rustle of English elms in her ears, and a lover on his way to claim her, it certainly was unfortunate.

Perceiving that she had given pain, Althea sought to undo it.

'I've often wondered, Mary, why you never married. I'm sure when you were young you were just sweet.'

Here a heavy foot was heard approaching. All listened, but it passed the door.

'What!' exclaimed Althea, scandalised. 'A man, and not for me! I declare, Mary, it's for you. Run off and see who it is. If he's nice just bring him right here.'

But Mary's nerve gave way. Panic seized her. She had not expected her lover till the morrow. The meeting had been tenderly rehearsed—ah! so many times!—but the woman who figured in it had not had her dowdiest frock on, nor had her hair been rumpled, nor her face smudged with ink.

'Oh dear! I can't see him, I can't!' she gasped, darting to the Grays' inner room.

Althea whistled boyishly. 'My goodness, I believe it's a dun. I'll go and turn him off.'

The corridor was dimly lighted, and Mary's visitor, mistaking Althea, in her white apron, for a chambermaid, asked in German for Miss Grove.

Althea replied, also in German, that she was emphatically not at home.

'Do you know when she will return?'

'That depends on your business with her.'

The chambermaid was examined with more attention.

'I'll inform her of my business when I see her.'

'Well, you can't see her, but I'll give her your name.'

'I'll be d——d if you do,' was muttered in English, and the caller turned on his heel.

'You'll be what? Oh, for shame!' Althea laughed, delighted at her mistake.

At the sound of his own tongue the stranger wheeled round again. He also perceived his error, but fell into a new one, for he concluded that the apron was a pinafore.

'Won't you give me your name?' pressed Althea, curious both for Mary's enlightenment and her own.

'Oh, certainly,' with a teasing smile. 'My name is John. Now you must tell me yours.'

'Althea. Please come and be presented to Mamma.'

'Oh, I say!'

'Come right along. Mary Grove's friends are ours.'

Amused, but rather uneasy, John obeyed the imperious summons.

'Mamma, this is an Englishman named John, who has called to see Mary Grove. Now, I guess you're ashamed of that "John."'

In the light which the large *salon* windows threw upon Althea's age and station, John saw that he had indeed styled himself rather briefly, and, with an embarrassed laugh, declared himself in full.

'Sir John Stokes! Oh, this is lovely! My goodness, won't Gerald be mad! He was giving himself such airs about bringing you.'

'Yes, Gerald is distinctly mad,' a voice remarked placidly from the doorway. 'I've been hoisting myself into Mittenberg esteem by promising to trot you round, old chap. This young person has been grovelling to get a sight of you. In the natural history books of the American nursery it seems that the titled British animal is not given.'

'Hear him!' Althea cried, and, extending her arm, she declaimed, "'The German nobility who have the *entrée* to our *salon* treat Althea with a deference that bids fair to turn the child's head." That's a quotation from one of Mamma's letters home. She should have added, "But there's a nobody, called Gerald Stokes, who makes himself odious by trying to keep it straight." And she rang for tea.

Gerald and Althea seated themselves for hostilities at close quarters, and Mrs. Gray was about to undertake Sir John, when she remembered Mary, and bade Althea fetch her.

Poor Mary had been dreading the summons, but, by the time it came, she was so spent with emotion that her only clear desire was to save the situation from awkwardness, and to escape. So she emerged, wan and dishevelled, after the radiant Althea, and gave Sir John a limp hand.

'Didn't you guess who it was?' Althea asked. 'One hears quite well in there.'

'The voice seemed familiar,' Mary stammered, 'but of course it is some time since I heard it.'

'How long?' Althea's curiosity disdained roundabout routes.

'Oh, ages and ages. I'm so sorry I can't stay now. I am due at a harmony class. But I'm disengaged to-morrow afternoon.'

with a glance at Sir John, which did not reach the level of his eyes, 'and I shall be glad if you will come to tea then—all.'

And without waiting to have her invitation accepted, she slipped from their midst.

'Well, genius or no genius, that's real mean,' Althea commented. 'No wonder he looks huffed. I'm going right over to console him.'

Now Gerald, under his calm exterior, was deeply annoyed at what had happened. He knew what had brought Sir John to Mittenberg, but was not certain, of course, of the issue, and consolation proffered by Althea was what he dreaded above everything. The worst of it was that, in impressing upon her the superiority of English husbands to all others, he had been paving a way that any Englishman might walk—his cousin more smoothly than most, with novelty and wealth to help him. Indeed he was so upset that he blundered.

'Dear generous child!' he sneered. 'But I'm sadly afraid it's no good. John has come to propose, you know.'

'To Mary Grove!'

'They were sweethearts before you were born.'

Althea looked her naughtiest.

'Well, I'm born now, anyway.'

Gerald, seeing his mistake, choked down his wrath and took a wiser tack.

'I thought Mary was your friend. Chip in, and the poor soul's done for. My dear girl, *is* that your style?'

'Oh, if she cares!'

'It's the one romance of her life. He was a younger son, you know. Left her to seek his fortune in the Colonies. Didn't find it, naturally—not the kind. But meanwhile accidents were clearing the course for him at home; and now they're going to be happy ever afterwards. John, though dull, is quite a good sort, and he'll suit her well enough. She was brought up, don't you know? to the sort of life he'll give her, and won't mind being buried in the country among a lot of gouty old squires, with the vicar's wife for company, and Sunday school treats for her only amusement. Oh, yes, he'll do for her; but for you!'

'It seems to me there has been a drop in Sir John since he arrived,' smiled Althea. Then she added demurely, 'and since you have mentioned the matter, who *do* you think would suit me?'

Gerald's pulse was less calm than his voice as he designated himself in a periphrasis.

'Why a man with some devil and go in him—someone bound to make his mark.'

'That's so,' Althea nodded. 'Somebody the whole world would talk of.'

'Is not that rather a big order?'

'Well, if he was even the talk of the town.'

'The talk of the town for a day?'

'I believe even that would do. You've hit on my weakness, you see.'

'The talk of the town for a day,' Gerald repeated slowly.

'You won't go back on it, Althea?'

Althea laughed. 'I never go back on anything—except this stupid train,' and whisking it aside, she advanced to welcome the rival counts who had just been announced, and who, Gerald knew, would now engross her entirely.

But this did not trouble him. His jealousy was discriminating, and he had long ago dismissed the pair from his calculations as a negligible quantity; for Von Brück, the elder of the two, though an excellent fellow, had won a duellist's fame by the loss of an eye and a profile, while the younger had such an evil tongue that he could safely be left to his own undoing.

Sir John was the dangerous man, so at the first opportunity Gerald rose and carried him off.

*The talk of the town for a day.* He had paced the streets until he was footsore, trying to evolve some scheme by which he might claim the words as descriptive of himself, when he happened to glance up at the statue of the great king, and noticed the ladder which was reared against it. 'By Jove!' he exclaimed; then he chuckled, and his eyes gleamed for an instant, before the impenetrable lids descended on them. Tired as he was, he disappeared with a swinging step, and for the rest of that day was lost to the ken of Mittenberg.

Next morning the town awoke to a scandal which it will not soon forget, and which to this day it has never really sifted to the bottom. Laurels crowned the brow of the mighty dead; floral tributes perfumed his feet. But Jove was transformed to Bacchus—the illustrious nose was red.

Mittenberg was shocked, but it laughed, and King Hermann, the great man's grandson and successor, furious at the grinning faces, shook his fist at them from his chamber, and refused to show himself on the balcony according to programme. 'Find me the impious beast,' he raged, 'and I will hew him through!'

Then the count of the evil tongue, who was a kinsman of the King, and in attendance, seized the opportunity.

'Sire, as Gustav von Brück and I were returning late to our quarters last night we saw a man jump off the scaffolding. He passed beneath a lamp, and we recognised him as an Englishman of our acquaintance named Stokes. We could not imagine at the time what he was doing there.'

The older courtiers, who had looked grave on learning that the 'hewing through' might have international issues, were sensibly relieved when Von Brück broke in: 'Sire, I saw the man, it is true, and so distinctly that I am ready to swear it was no more Stokes than I am. The Englishman in question is a man of good position who moves in our best society, and it would be ridiculous in the extreme to bring such an accusation against him.'

The King looked from one angry face to the other, and then dismissed them both, that he might take counsel on the matter with men of a more sluggish pulse. 'If Von Brück has room for another scar, I hope he'll get it,' he muttered, referring to the duel which was, of course, inevitable after such a scene, 'for, by my soul, he lied.'

Meanwhile, Althea and her mother had happened to meet Sir John, and they had strolled together to the scene of interest, where they arrived just in time to see the nose before the paint was officially removed.

Everybody was discussing the perpetrator of the outrage.

'He has succeeded in making himself the talk of the town, whoever he is,' Sir John remarked. 'They say the King is quite bloodthirsty, and has sworn to hew him through when he catches him.'

'Oh, my goodness!' Althea exclaimed, and she dropped her parasol.

Gerald, who had sauntered up to them, recovered it. 'Yes, I'm the talk of the town,' he whispered.

'How *could* you be so mad?'

'It wasn't mad to win you; for I have won you, Althea. You never go back on your word, you remember.'

'You'll have to get out of this.'

'Nonsense; I'm perfectly safe. Oh, bother Von Brück! He has seen us.'

They had fallen a little behind Mrs. Gray and Sir John when Von Brück joined them. Without taking any notice of Gerald, he began in a low tone: 'You've been informed on, Stokes, and



must bolt for all you're worth. I drove to your rooms with a disguise for you, but found them watched. Thinking you might be at Mrs. Gray's, I went there next, but there was nobody in. Then I tried Miss Grove's, for I wanted to leave the bundle with some friend. She was out too, but her *salon* door was open. On her table you'll find the wherewithal to transform you into a Lutheran parson, and if that parson values his skin he'll contrive somehow to catch the two o'clock express. The King is in a fine taking, I warn you. He'll soon cool off again—that is his way—but I wouldn't like to answer for him just now.'

'All right; you're a decent chap, Von Brück. I may tell the Pater, Althea?'

'Oh, anything you like; only go!' and Althea stamped her foot in an agony of impatience.

When Gerald had disappeared she looked at Von Brück. 'I guess you've behaved rather well,' she said, 'for you hate him, you know.'

'I do,' Von Brück assented heartily.

'Then why——?'

'But, Fraulein, is he not my rival?'

Althea dropped her gaze, and there was something like moisture in her hard young eyes as she dealt the blow she could not spare him. 'He has no rival now,' she said gravely. 'He has just become my affianced husband.'

Although Von Brück's face was too scarred to be very expressive, it showed so much pain that Althea sighed. 'I don't know why I care for Gerald. You're twice as good a man, and I hope you'll marry a woman twenty times better than me.'

There was nothing further from Althea's contrite mood than to cause more mischief that morning, but Nature had so constituted her that she could hardly avoid it; and when, shortly afterwards, Sir John excused himself in order to join Mary, who was skirting the crowd, her smile, for radiant sweetness, might have been the first that Eve bestowed upon Adam in Paradise.

Mary saw it, and attributed the light in Sir John's eyes, as he approached her, to past and not anticipated pleasure. Indeed, she was in the frame of mind that pushes straws up the current, and so judges its flow. A night of anguished reasoning from false premises had made her ripe for martyrdom, and when Sir John invited her to stroll into a quiet street, and plunged desperately into business, she drew him up at once. 'Why should we re-open a question which circumstances have tacitly closed?'

'What circumstances?'

'I have changed.'

'You have indeed!'

'And it is only fair to you—and myself—that I should release you. I shall always retain a pleasant memory of the past, but if we did not break with it now it would only spoil our future. Good-bye, John. This is too painful.'

Sir John took a step or two after the resolute little figure, then he turned and trailed himself home like some mortally wounded animal. All through his starved years of exile his heart had yearned for this mate. She had meant England, hearth, and home for him. The thought of her was interwoven with his life, which, without her, fell to shreds. Certainly he had found her altered, but love like his adjusts itself unconsciously, and, after the first glance, he did not know that he had expected her to be otherwise. He was as nearly broken-hearted as a man in his prime can be.

And Mary's case was no better. Now that the excitement of the sacrifice was over she for the first time realised its cost. Also with the instinct of the wounded animal, she made straight for her lair, and, letting herself into her bedroom direct from the passage, threw herself on her bed and wailed aloud.

A Lutheran divine who had been fixing on a beard in her *salon*, with locked doors, and who was about to knock through and inform her of his presence, paused and listened.

'Now I wonder if that's a parson's business,' he muttered, as he moved about uneasily.

The weeping stopped. Mary had heard his step, and looked in. She was on the point of closing her door again and ringing for the chambermaid, when Gerald exclaimed, 'Good Lord! Mary, what's the matter?' and betrayed himself.

'Gerald, what *do* you mean?'

'Well, I haven't much time to explain, but, briefly, I'm in a hole. A little painting of mine—which was skied, by the way—has suddenly made me famous. Mittenberg is ringing with my achievement. Even the King, I hear, has expressed—to the police—a personal interest in my career. In fact, my dear girl, I am responsible for *The Nose*. So much for my affairs. Now for yours. Where is John? And why these tears?'

Mary was backing again, when Gerald caught the door-handle and eyed her sternly. 'Mary Grove, you wicked woman! I believe you have jilted the truest man living.' He had forgotten his suspicions of Sir John.

'Thank Heaven I haven't been base enough, at any rate, to trade upon his honour!'

'Upon his fiddlesticks! The proof?'

'Oh, you know! Everybody must have seen.'

'What?'

'Nobody could resist her—nobody. She is so terribly pretty and so young. I knew from the first moment what must happen.'

Gerald smiled grimly. 'I presume you refer to Althea. Well, you paint my future in alluring colours. She has just promised to be my wife.'

Amazement, joy, shame, struggled in Mary's face, but it was joy that triumphed.

'Now I'm off, or I'll lose my train, and if I find John on the platform, as is probable, I'll bundle him back to you, though it's a jolly sight more than you deserve, you know.' And before his interference could be declined, Gerald had whisked his clerical tails through the doorway.

But he was not to fulfil his programme, for he was met on the stair by Von Brück with the news that Sir John had been arrested.

'He had gone to your rooms, you see, and the name and nationality tallied. He will easily clear himself, of course; meanwhile the mistake is to your advantage, for the trains are not likely to be watched now.'

'Oh, stow it, Von Brück! You are not preaching as you would practise. No, John's affairs are critical, and he's due here within the hour. I must give myself up. But what sort of a man is this King of yours? Has he no common sense, no humour? Is he always engineering mountains out of molehills? How do you suppose the true and unvarnished tale would strike him?' And Gerald related it. 'There isn't much sedition about that, eh? Would it be possible to obtain an audience?'

Von Brück shook his head.

'Well, you can always get his ear, can't you? Turn on your eloquence on my behalf. There's a good chap! Whatever comes of it, I shall know you've done your best.'

Von Brück regarded him with a wondering eye. Did he realise whom he was trusting, what he was asking?

'Yes, I know. It's a lot to ask of any man—of you most of all. But, my dear fellow, you lick every saint in the calendar, and we'll bless you till our dying day.'

The King was a man of moods, and, by the time Von Brück

obtained a hearing, had come to the conclusion that the incident of the morning was beneath official notice. Indeed, he had already given instructions that the mad Englishman should be released with no worse penalty than the hint that Mittenberg did not relish entertaining foreigners who abused her hospitality. So when Von Brück, prefacing his disclosure with, 'Sire, I am now at liberty to confess to you that I lied,' had related the secret history of the nose, Hermann burst out laughing.

'By my soul, that young man should go far! He gains his end boldly and simply. But I await an explanation of your conduct in the matter.'

'This morning, sire, he and I were rivals for the hand of the woman he has since won.'

'Humph! 'Tis better to be your rival than your King, it seems. Still, it may console you, under the circumstances, to know that, as I cannot be the one, I am content to be the other.'

As soon as Gerald learned how things stood, he drove to Sir John's hotel and put a stop to his packing.

'Imagine aspiring to spend your life with a woman,' he scolded, 'and understanding her as little as you do Mary! Can't you see that she's one of those beautiful souls who perish for want of conceit. Of course she made a nightmare of Althea.'

'Of that baby!'

'Who will shortly be Mrs. Gerald Stokes. Oh, don't mention it. But of all the blundering idiots!'

So Mary sang her love song that night, while, next door, a clerical habit, already compromised by attendance at several fancy balls, was being brought into further disrepute by Gerald.

'But after all, you know,' said Althea teasingly, 'it was Sir John who was the talk of the town. It is he who ought to be rewarded.'

'There's something in that. Suppose we go and consult Mary. No? Well, let's go and be congratulated, at least.'

So they paid their call, and long before it was over Althea had seen enough to convince her that the reward would be best appreciated where it had already been bestowed.

MARGARET ARMOUR.

## *Some Scouts — but not Scouting.*

'SCOUT,' 'scouts,' and 'scouting' are three words which were used more loosely, perhaps, than any others during the whole of the late disturbances in South Africa. Regiment after regiment of irregulars was raised under the name of this, that, and t'other 'Scouts,' which yet from first to last did no stroke of scouting, but remained purely and simply the invaluable mounted infantry such regiments proved to be. It followed that thousands of men rode about with the title 'Scout' big and bold upon their hats, who yet knew as little of real scouting work as if they were straight from Aldershot. And as to 'scouting,' I remember that a daily patrol over the same three miles of road, starting at dawn every morning, was called 'scouting' by the commandant of a most important depot point. My suggestion that I should be allowed to take the half of the men and push away for four or five days into the Free State was called 'idiotic talk' by the same commandant; but that was the first month of the war.

What, then, are real scouts and real scouting? The cavalry had a trumpet call, 'Scouts out,' but that only meant 'ground scouts' — men who, by riding two or three hundred yards ahead may give warning of any bad ground in time for the squadron leaders behind to change direction or formation to avoid it. 'Scouting' meant so much at least to the cavalry before the war, and perhaps more — parts of reconnaissance maybe; but, for the information which a real scout deals in, the cavalryman had to fall back, and rightly so, upon the Intelligence Department, that department which does or should employ real scouts.

For the real scout belongs, technically or not, to the Intelligence Department of an army, and is a distinct part of the intelligence branch of a General's Staff in the field. Go back to the regular use of the word in our earlier military history, and you find that Cromwell's 'Scoutmaster-General' was the 'D.M.I.' (Director of Military Intelligence) of that day. And, for proof

of the logicalness of the title, just note that during the latter half of our troubles in South Africa the Intelligence Department again staffed every military district and every mobile column with its complement of scouts. Naturally, the starving rule which stunts the Department of its best possibilities resulted here in such undermanning that the white scouts had to do most of their work, instead of only part of it, through Kaffirs. If the public is really looking to a reform of the War Office, one of the chief things it should insist upon is that of putting the scout's branch of the Intelligence Department upon a proper footing.

Still, in this respect a great deal lay with the column commanders themselves. Wools-Sampson's work for Bruce Hamilton will at once occur to most readers. One column, I remember, which finished not far from Frankfort, in the Orange River Colony, had a well-chosen body of from thirty to forty white scouts under an old 'Rimpie' (Rimington Guide). Damant, taking over the Guides from Rimington, had always an unsurpassable lot, because he found his own scouts from his own men, and was, moreover, his own scoutmaster. While for Rimington himself, he need only be mentioned, his name having become synonymous with the thing itself, since the Intelligence Department ultimately absorbed his original Guides almost to a man.

But in the earlier part of the war, when the Intelligence Branch was in evil case indeed, how many Generals knew how to pick and use a body of scouts? Few indeed: one or two names come up perhaps—as, for instance, that of French at Colesberg; and the disasters of the Black Week serve to remind us of those Generals who did not know how to use scouts. But to some of us comes back instantly the name of Hutton—Hutton who never once had to 'regret to report,' and who was whole-hearted enough to write to Rimington and say that, next to the splendid fighting qualities of his force, he owed his immunity from disaster to the work of 'the little band of scouts' he had drawn (chiefly) from the Guides.

Hutton kept no tame correspondents with him, and so he is little known. Restless, full of energy—and therefore oozing initiative at every pore—he gave his scouts a brisk time indeed. With him a scout was put to all of his proper work, and sometimes to that of cavalry besides. I remember being sent with four men on a two-days expedition which I afterwards saw written—and rightly so—as 'a reconnaissance.' And a hairy old reconnaissance it proved too; valuable in its results, anticipating all other



information by two days, though upon a point vital. There was some pleasure, however, in working for a man who not only let one see clearly what was wanted, but took pains to understand clearly one's own ideas in return, and who, above all, was loyal to the information gained, acting on it, if need be, whole-heartedly. No risk was too great to take in scouting for one who appreciated the results so truly; and the knowledge that our information was acted upon gave us that sense of responsibility which puts the salt into work well done. If one is killed while doing serious work, well, that is at least a man's death, and so not to be troubled about overmuch. It is the fool's death, the being killed in getting information for a General who neither dare nor can use it rightly, that makes a man hesitate. It is the thought of that epitaph 'Died as the fool dieth' which causes the scout to return to camp with half results; results upon which he himself would certainly not act if put in the General's place—such results, therefore, as are dangerous. The best work will only be done for a useful end. Other things being equal, the best General will evolve the best scouts from the men he chooses.

But, in gauging the work of a scout, it cannot be too clearly insisted upon that the amount of risk run in getting the information has nothing whatever to do with the value of the information so obtained. Remember also that there is one maxim over all, to the effect that the scout must never shoot unless forced to do so, for the scout must, if possible, see without being seen. Bearing all these points in mind, then, read here what follows, and understand the better.

It was on the morning of the Queen's Birthday, 1900, very early, that we—four scouts, myself in charge—returning proudly from being the first to cross the Vaal, found the head of French's advance just entering the grassy lawn-like streets of beautiful Parys. At first, mindful of the work we had done and the reports we had sent in these four days past, we took these to be the feelers of some wing force, clearing Parys by the way. We were no little astonished to find it was the main advance—French's division, with Hutton in support, come here to cross into the Transvaal. By a mistake, which does not belong to this story, our report of last night had failed to reach the General.

There was a row, very ungenteel, which need not be reported, when Hutton found that there was no waggon drift at Parys, that it was impossible to get the baggage across, and that the transport would have to swing out again and trek north for another drift.

We were his ewe lambs, his pride and his boast; and yet we had let him in for the open jibes of the scoffing cavalry and the stinging chaff of French himself—'Why! my Hussars told me that, hours ago!' said French, in answer to the belated news of a punt just up the river.

There was no help for it, and no use wasting time. A squadron was thrown across the river, and then the main force pulled away for Old Viljoen's Drift, the waggons arriving there so near to midnight that few of the men would rouse out to use them. Food and blankets are good, but sleep is sweetest of all to an utterly weary man. Morning showed the drift too bad for more than a few light carts, and so, while the main body crossed and continued up on the Transvaal side, a sufficiently strong escort took the heavy transport still further on to Lindeque's Drift, where the crossing was made that afternoon.

Now, all day yesterday we of the Scouts had been in disgrace with our father Hutton, and to-day was little better. But we were gorged with weariness and beyond caring just yet. The strenuous work of the last seven days and nights—especially the nights—had cleaned us out of all but mere endurance, and so we rode stolidly along as the 'old man's' bodyguard, doing little or nothing in the scouting line. 'The Hussars told him that, hours ago—did they? Very well, let 'em do it again to-day,' said we to each other, in effect, that day. At any rate, we left it all to others on the outer flank, towards Potchefstroom, sending only to the inner flank towards the main Boer forces.

One must pay for one's sins, however, and accordingly that night we had to face a plentiful crop of 'information' brought in by the different regiments, especially one circumstantial yarn to the tune that some thousands of Boers were threatening us from the Potchefstroom side. We grinned a little at that: it must be a very sudden Boer army indeed, unless our work in the three days before Parys was altogether wrong. A few hundreds, yes, as we had reported, but no thousands. Yet Hutton could not openly flout the whole cavalry division—crack cavalry division—and, moreover, he wanted a dry jibe back at French for that guffaw about the Hussars. He apparently fell in with the yarn, and promised to see about it. We grinned still more, until I got my orders. Then we rather swore a little.

For the orders, as I got them, were rankly illegitimate. I was to start at daybreak next morning with a few men, and to go nine miles on the road to Potchefstroom. Further, I was to make all

speed there and back, and report to the General by nine-thirty at the very latest—reconnaissance work, in fact, without the force. I call such orders illegitimate, because the route, distance, and time were all laid down exactly as for a reconnaissance—cast-iron lines to which I must shape all I did. If those orders did not get me hanged, my luck would have to be anything but cast-iron.

Explain to a scout what information you want, and up to what time it will be of use. Then let him go his own gait—you will get more good of him that way. To speak truly, this order was so far out of Hutton's usual way of doing things that I saw it at once as a logical consequence of an unnecessary situation, clearly the result of our sullen unenterprisingness all that day. It was quite our own fault that we got such orders, and with that notion in my mind I turned away to sleep.

I was no sooner in the blankets, however, than the men came stealing through the dark as usual, to beg me to name them for the party in the morning. I named the first four: Drybrough, and eighteen-year-old Creed of the Guides, with Irwin and 'Tiny' Marshall of the Canadians. Then we dropped off to sleep, happy enough.

Now Marshall was called 'Tiny' by reason of his gigantic limbs and stature.

In the morning, then, some while before it was day, I roused the four to see to the feeding of their horses before we ourselves took coffee. Then, just as it grew light, and while we stood by to mount, came a little knot of Staff officers—good, sound fellows mostly—and, amongst the rest of the talk, they told me that word had come in that the Boers in the direction I was going desired to surrender. This information had in truth come from a seemingly good source, as I afterwards found, but surely not good enough for the additional order which a certain officer in authority—not Hutton by any means—presently based upon it.

I had stepped aside for a moment, and this officer followed me. 'If you do meet any Boers,' said he, 'then you'd better see if they want to surrender first. That's really what you are being sent to find out.' Orders were given that way too often in the field.

Then I gave the word and we mounted. 'What d'you call it—a reconnaissance in force?' came as a parting 'rag' from the youngest of the Staff officers. It was the oldest of them who, after our return, called it a reconnaissance *by force*—of cheek.

But he had not heard the true story, and so misunderstood what really happened.

As we rode up out of the low-lying camp, over a little nek in the kopjes rimming it on that side, we found ourselves at this end of an ovalish piece of flat, drawing away south of west, and shut in all round, except for a slack place on the east, by high and rocky ridges, black and forbidding in that early light. Marking ahead, we saw that the going was bad across the flat. Bogs were there, with barb-wire fences crossing them, while along the right of the boggy strip, where the slightly sloping ground was drier, we saw, by the zuiker-bush and 'wait-a-bits,' that under foot would be all rocks and stones.

The worst part of the prospect, however, lay in the ridges along our right and in front; they looked as bad as bad could be—gaunt boulder heaps, patterned from end to end with sparse, single bushes, looking like a machine-made tapestry of grey and dull green, a giant 'art fabric' of the latest craze, with an Aubrey Beardsley inspired design. Only, while one might think of Regent Street 'art' and grin, one could not so treat these ridges; they were too perfect as cover for enemies to be laughed at. Moreover, if there were Boers in the neighbourhood—and we knew of one or two small commandoes which might be there—those ridges, being the nearest strong cover to our outposts, were certain to hold some of them at least.

Unhampered by time, I should have tried those ridges for Boers first, and then worked from them on, as the only decent chance of doing this piece of country at all. But orders must be carried out; and so, for better speed, and the quicker to hit the Potchefstroom road, I had to stick to the plain below. I did not like the look of things at all. One's motto under ordinary orders must always be—'First take all precautions, and then take all risks.' Here one read it with a certain difference, conforming to the difference in the spirit of the orders—'Having to take all risks, first take all precautions.'

Looking about as we went, that oval seemed very forlorn of possible precautions, till half a mile or so forward we came to a Kaffir hut. Here were only women and children; but I set young Creed to talk to them in Dutch, and presently, over a calabash of *dwaala*, he learnt that a Kaffir from Potchefstroom had just lured the men away to loot that red house over yonder to the left—to the east, that is—where the rim of the plain was green and not too steep. Now, this Kaffir had yesterday deserted

from his master in a commando near by, yonder to the right front—the way that we would go. Here, then, was something to begin on.

Riding and picking our way through bog and fence, we presently bagged our Kaffir. He was a most promising spectacle, as he came out through the doorway in haste and fright at the sound of our horses' hoofs—spectacle because he had just finished arraying himself in choice samples of the Sunday best of the owner of the house, fled suddenly yesterday; and in fright because he feared that we were burghers come upon him. Which last was a hint to us.

His fright was not all done with either at finding us British instead of Boer. He had still been caught by white men while looting a white man's house. The proof was plain, nay, 'shouting,' as Drybrough said, 'upon him.' He was dressed, first, in a grey 'pot' hat, with a handbreadth of crape band about it. Next one saw a pair of new boots, much too large, and gorgeously yellow. Between were a coat and vest of most emphatic pattern, big enough to make greatcoats for him; sleeves down to his knees, and skirt almost trailing. Below were trousers severely black, and concertina'd all the way from the knee down by reason of their too much length and too stiff lining; while above was a collar some sizes too large, cravated in absolute scarlet. He out-niggered all the niggers the Christy Minstrels ever dreamed of staging. Poor beggar, it was the gaudiness of that looted rig which struck me deepest for him by contrast in the tragedy he presently rode into.

For the moment he seemed far enough from tragedy; indeed he looked mostly farce as he faced me, half impudent in hope, half shrinking in dread, guessing at what his punishment might be. Had he but known what that looting was to bring him to he would have shrunk more than half, for it was that which gave me the power to make him accompany us, and to force him, when the final grim moment came, to obey.

He spoke no English, but the few questions I put through Creed showed me that he was just what I needed. His knowledge of the country near, with its farms and their owners, would stand me in stead at every mile and turn. One thing, however, we could not get out of him—he would not acknowledge to having been on commando with his master. Yet that would no doubt come out in time when Creed had him riding alongside, talking guilefully to him of other things. Direct questions



beget evasive taradiddles with Kaffirs as with others. Lastly he protested that he had no horse, but we persuaded him to remember one grazing just round the little kopje in front, so that presently he was astride barebacked, and accompanying us as we laid spur to it along the little plain again, heading for Potchefstroom.

I have said the plain was something of an oval shape. We headed now, by the Kaffir's directions, straight for the westerly apex of it, where a beautifully formed spitz or pointed kop rose in the flat, some quarter of a mile this way from the farther edge of it. I looked long at that kop standing out alone and fair there in front, its beautiful scarps and rocks draped by bush and shapely tree. Good to look at, indeed, but good too as cover for possible Boers.

'Boers!' And here upon the thought, as I glanced to my left front in going, I was aware of two men who rode down from the bushy ridge on that side, perhaps a mile or so away, drawing rapidly across our front, heading to disappear behind the spitz kop. 'What place is behind there?' I asked of the Kaffir, through Creed.

'In the hook behind is a great farmhouse and good gardens,' came the answer. 'The road goes through there, and on over a little nek beyond.'

A farmstead hidden in a corner, eh? and having well-grown orchards, with willows, gum-trees, poplars, and the rest of it, for hiding horses in; and all in the mouth of an easy way of retreat, through which only fools would follow into the trap it formed. It sounded more than a likely place as we pushed on. If there were Boers at all in the line for Potchefstroom, meaning business, then this farm-place was the very spot they would occupy. And if so, then these two riders must be coming from the brandwacht, or picket, which would be posted on that ridge to our left—coming, doubtless, to report our appearance. And, further, then this spitz kop in front, dominating the approach to the farm, must be occupied by a like picket. It followed also that the comb of the long ridge to our right must be held, perhaps by more than one picket, for it was on the Potchefstroom side.

The thing was to know, and to know quickly, if all this were so. Already the two horsemen would have reported our coming, and one must get in, and out again if need be, before the Boers behind—if Boers were there—could get a move on and act against us. We pushed on quicker.

Presently we were within range of the kop, and I held rein,



halting the party. 'That spitz kop will have Boers all over it,' spoke Irwin, before I had time to begin.

'That is just what may make this such a hairy job,' answered I. 'Now, here is the only thing to do. I'll take Creed and the nigger, and push on as tight as I can go between the spitz kop and this ridge on the right—there's bush enough to give some bit of cover part of the way. You other three will dismount here in this nearest clump of trees, and then line your rifles on that spitz kop. If you hear any shooting yonder where we have gone, then you three will open on that kop before it has time to speak, and you'll just keep it jumping with bullets, whether it speaks or not. Remember that: lay on to that kop and leave all else. Remember that our only chance to get out to you again is to come back close under the spitz kop, then the ridge yonder on the right will have so far to shoot that it'll miss us nicely, and we'll depend on you to disturb the aim of the fellows on the kop. Don't forget; they'll be shooting at us from the farm behind all the time—that's if we find a commando there. If there is none, then I'll send back for you at once. And now keep your eyes jingling—and "so long!"'

Then Creed and I rode on, taking the unwilling Kaffir.

Keeping what apology for cover we could, amongst the sparse sugar bush and thorns, we pushed briskly forward and through between the kop and the long high ridge, while right and left our eyes were snapping for that sign of occupation which no brandwacht should show. And, because it was again our day for luck, I caught sight of the movement of a single rifle barrel upon the slope of the kop, showing like a grey flash against the skyline as it was whipped down into position against us. We were already abreast of it, less than two hundred yards away, but we could not turn back for that.

I knew now that both the left-hand ridge and this spitz kop had been picketed, and that made it certain that this farm behind was held, and just as certain that the ridge to the right was manned, though I could see nothing of either force. Yet we must see the farm, and judge the number there, which meant that we must still pass on, maugre the men of the ridge and kop behind us, yet within close range when we should halt in front to crane and count. And if we had to turn and gallop for it—fire behind and fire in front, fire from both flanks—we should need all our luck indeed. Well, it had to be done. This was not scouting, this was reconnaissance. Come on!

Then we emerged into the open, clear of the kop, and found, just where our open view should have been, the near end of a ridge of grey rock, worn down to a mere hog-back of slab and boulders, some fifteen or twenty feet high, trending away down the slight slope towards the farm.

Checking, with little enough of us showing as we peered through the crevices of the rocks, we found no chance of mistaking. Our coming may have roused them from sleep, but they were awake enough now. The farm-place was alive with men: long-legged *kerels* who ran to catch the knee-haltered horses grazing all about; stealthy *kerels* who stooped through the trees of the garden to line the thick hedge less than a hundred yards from us; bundly-looking *kerels* who jumped up in groups from where they slept at the foot of the rise beyond, all their gaudy blankets hanging Kaffirwise about their shoulders as they snatched their rifles up and ran to man the rocks above them, still within pistol-shot of us. Evidently we were taken as the advance scouts of our whole army, intending for Potchefstroom, instead of five poor beggars on a lone fool's errand.

And mounted *kerels*—five of them especially, of whom one went straight back over the nek, as if carrying word to some supports, while the other four bent away round, as if to go and rouse the pickets on the great ridge to our right. Boers enough, in very truth, if that were all we wanted to know. But the last order stuck uppermost in my mind—‘You are really sent out to find if they want to surrender.’

Ay, find out, but how? There was no time for plans elaborate. ‘Creed,’ said I, ‘I’ve got to go down to see if these men want to surrender. I’m going down this right side of the rock. I want you to go along that left side as far as you can without being seen—there’s a bit of cover at the point—and then stop and see what happens to me. If you hear an argument, listen to what they say. If you hear a shot, don’t stop to look or think, but turn and ride like blazes back to the General and tell him all you’ve seen. Stop for nothing; just ride.’

I had lifted my rein and was half out in the open on my side the rock when Creed answered: ‘One minute! Do you mean I’m to leave you in a tight place like this? Am I to go back safe, and let them all know I left you?’ He reined half a length towards me as he spoke.

‘That has nothing to do with it. The General must have this information, and some one must carry it. I’m in command, so

I must do the job, because if you went down and were killed I couldn't ride out anyhow. I'd have to stop and be killed too, being in command, and we'd look fine, two dead fools, with no information to the General, or anything to show for getting killed. You do as I tell you, and hang what others think. There'll be danger enough for you when you try to get back and they open on you from all the round world about.'

I was well out into the open as I ended, but with a stroke of the spur he was beside me. 'I don't care! I'm not going to let you go alone. I'm not running away. If you are going to be killed here, then I'll die here too. I'm coming.'

There is no V.C. for what the lad did then, as he rode out in speaking, but was it ever more truly earned—if you grant his quite erroneous view of his duties as a scout? If we had but pressed another length forward, then we had been dead men, thought he, for we saw the rifles levelling in the hedge. There was no time to drive it into the lad that a man's private feelings, his liking or disliking, or any regard to the opinions of the multitude, must all sink before the grim duty of getting information away to the General. All that his eighteen years could see was the unbearable shame of continuing to live if he should let me go and be killed alone; and well he reckoned this was death in front.

It was shining in his eyes and his face—sheer, fine, deplorable heroism. I saw it all at a glance and that I was baulked by the very fineness of his temper. Curses would be wasted, neither was there time. I reined back into cover, crowding him into cover likewise.

'Look you, then, Creed,' said I, 'the Kaffir must go, and we'll hear what they say to him. Tell him to ride down and speak to them. They can't shoot him, for they can see he's no fighting man: they can see he has no rifle or saddle. Tell him he must say to them that the General has heard they want to surrender. Say to him to tell them that if they do want to surrender and lay down their arms, then I'll escort two of them safe through our lines to see the General. Be sure he understands what you are telling him. And let him move quickly.'

It is easy to say that any fool could see that these Boers in front had no notion of surrendering. But if so, then please explain the reason why we were allowed to approach over something like three miles of flat, to pass through their outposts, and to come here to within a hundred yards of their line, and all without a single shot or challenge! They were asleep, say you?

Possibly; but where was my proof? For remember it is not enough that the scout must be convinced—he must have proof for it; he must lay out his proofs for any important opinion when he reports. I could not well prove that their outposts had been caught asleep, and therefore I could not use their allowing me to approach as any argument that they wished to surrender. I must have other evidence, and so I started the Kaffir down.

And the Kaffir went. Loth he was to move, but I said that to him which caused him to go, for I believed that he would be safe in going to them, riding unarmed as he did. After that day I knew better; but at the time I was honest in forcing him to go, in spite of the dread that was so heavy on him. Twice he halted in going, and once he reined half round to return. But his eye met the levelled eye of my carbine, and ‘Ride on!’ said I, and he rode.

It was so short a distance that he went not more than seventy yards and then he met the first of them, four long-bearded, long-legged *takhaars*, rifle in hand, running to catch their horses. I heard his voice, quick and shrill, half inarticulate with haste and dread, quivering out his explanation, and under it like blows the headlong wrath of the four in answer. ‘Creed,’ said I, as we watched, ‘there’s no surrender there; it is time to go.’

And then I turned quickly at the sound of a rush behind, and straightway spoke again, for in beside us reined the three I had left outside to help us. ‘—— boys! but you have done it,’ said I, but speaking gently for the very gravity of it. ‘Who will keep the spitz kop quiet now while we ride under?’ They had feared they were missing some sport, and so had followed after. They deserved to be shot, no doubt, but there was no time to scarify them at that minute.

They had no word to excuse themselves, nor was there time for silence. I went on, ‘Take a good look now before we start, so the one that gets through can tell the General. This garden hedge, that red barn and stables, the farmhouse and kraals—they’re all thick with them. That ridge beyond is alive, and some have ridden over the nek to rouse others. This kop behind, and the ridges right and left, have posts on them. Now get mounted again and come away.’

‘Get mounted,’ repeated I, for while I was speaking Drybrough had jumped down with only one word for it all. ‘A shot! Gad! what a shot! Look yonder at that chance, under the tree on the other slope—seven six-footers in black. That’ll be the commandant. Climb off, boys; one volley will get the lot!’ It had been too

tempting for the rest to see the seven chief men of the commando standing, broad and quiet in the open, looking steadily at us. The seven must have thought the Kaffir was bringing our surrender, we being so far inside their outposts.

But I held Drybrough fast and dragged him back by the scruff. One shot from him would have brought a hail upon us from every side, and in the delay of mounting we must all have been hit. I saw all the tempting certainty of getting that seven; resting our rifles over the rocks we could hardly have missed such a mark at such a range. But we were not here to kill; our work was to get and carry away information. 'A scout must never shoot unless forced to it.'

Drybrough's eyes were snapping to shoot, yet even he could see reason as I dragged him to his stirrup. He as well as the rest could hear the louder din from the increasing cluster round the frightened Kaffir. 'What are they saying, Creed?' asked I.

'They are giving him fits,' answered the lad, as he mounted. And I saw that it was so, for one long, ruddy-bearded burgher struck the Kaffir sharply in the stomach with the muzzle of his rifle, shouting the while in tones that were themselves threats.

My four were mounted ready. I put my foot in the stirrup. 'Scatter now!' I shouted. 'Scatter, and ride for it! Stoop and ride! Go!

Then as I swung into the saddle I glanced behind again, and heard a shot in that angry cluster, and saw the Kaffir slip down amongst them. Whether it were that shot or the starting of my four I know not, but on that instant we got the tearing burst of bullets from every side. It came from hedge and farm and ridge; it came from mounted men all over the place who halted and shot from the saddle; it came from the spitz kop yonder; yea, it seemed to come from the very bushes at our bridle elbows as we went.

Yet neither man nor horse was hit, and, except that I carried the Queen's chocolate ribbon tied at the throat of my jacket, we had had no mark to show for it all. But as I laid the spur to start, a bullet snicked away one streamer of the ribbon as it lifted in the wind.

And if we must go so roaring fast over such bad ground, then it was well the bullets were so thick that they maddened the horses to get away; for maddened horses are sure-footed in the worst places. And here, where the going was all loose stones and stiff bushes, where the casual rider would scarcely venture his



horse at more than a walk, our horses kept their feet at the wild pace of fear. Picked horses, they were well worth their picking, all save one. That one was the handsome red bay under 'Tiny.'

'Tiny' himself was a sore weight to carry in such a desperate race, yet the horse promised well till we came under the spitz kop, where the fire seemed to burst more furious still. There 'Tiny' pressed him for a spurt to pass the quicker, and straightway at that the carrion heart failed in the beast, and I saw his tail lie out aslant, like a frightened mongrel's, as his rider urged him on. But so slow he went that I, who had purposely taken forty yards the worst of the start for the chance of helping any one hit, could not now keep my horse from drawing level with him, though some fifty yards to the right.

We were all riding at about the same distance apart, the better to divide the fire and miss the bullets, and I, watching 'Tiny' on my left, heard him shout, and saw his horse slow down so suddenly that I could only think one or both badly hit. At every stride the beast seemed about to drop.

'Boys!' I shouted, "'Tiny's" got it! One of you this way.'

But in that roar they heard nothing, and it was only as from time to time they glanced round that they saw where I had turned. Then straightway they all turned too, forgetting the information and the General and all else but the comrade in danger. For I had got a mighty pull on my own good horse, heading him round for 'Tiny,' though with not the slightest intention of taking that impossible weight up behind me. Even old 'Gold-dust' himself was not equal to such a burden. The rule was simple, with no room for heroics. I had to bring every man off the field, and be the last man out myself. Here I could give 'Tiny' my horse and send him on, till Drybrough or one of the others on a big horse could come and give me a lift out.

Then all the weight of that resolution was lifted from my mind, for as I came alongside, checking to swing down, my leg half over the cantle, I saw the wretched brute under 'Tiny' prick up his ears to old 'Gold-dust,' and straightway spring into shape again. The sight of another horse had given him fresh hope—one cannot say courage—and he plucked up a turn of speed that would serve if no bullet hit him. He showed no mark of having been hit, so far.

By this time the others were crowding in upon us (giving the firing fresh hope), all bent to see the last man out of it; all ready unconsciously to earn V.C.'s from the newspapers, and eternal



damnation from Generals awaiting information. But I swore loud enough in time enough to get them scattered again, and so we took up the running once more, until we drew away from all firing but that of the few mounted men who had followed us. Fewer grew the bullets, but closer—the rule was always good that the farther one drew away the straighter the burghers threw—till at last the final one fell far short. Then we held rein at the Kaffir huts again, where awhile ago we drank the *dwaala* and first heard of the Potchefstroom boy, now dead behind us.

Here I sent Creed in to report to the General, and Irwin to see 'Tiny' on as far as a fresh horse, while Drybrough and I dismounted to wait and see if any force of Boers would move this way. Nothing showed, however, save on the right, where I caught a glint of two Boers edging our way through the bushes at the foot of the great ridge. A brisk half-dozen shots put them back at speed, and after that was only the quiet and the sunshine, not a sign of Boer force in front, or British behind, where our army was again on its march to the north.

It was no use waiting longer. The Boers could not intend any move this way in time to affect the march of our army. We mounted and got away home.

The General was just preparing to mount as I rode by. 'Did you get my report, sir?' I asked.

'Yes, nothing of importance, was there? Just a sort of observation party to see what we were up to, eh?' said Hutton briskly.

'Something of that, sir; except that they have some other force behind them. They sent word to it.'

'But nothing to threaten us seriously,' finished the General. 'Thanks!' Then turning to a Staff officer, he continued, 'Let headquarters know that my scouts confirm the report I sent in from Parys. A few small bodies of Boers along the river—not enough to trouble us. That's all.'

Yea, that was all—except to the dead Kaffir behind, who knew too much now for troubling. And except to me, who had much more than that, for I had the memory of Creed's words—of the thing he had done when there was no gallery to see or to applaud; when there would have been only the Eternal to know why he had died, had I gone on.

That was all—it was enough. Scouting has its rewards, though they are not medals.

A. O. VAUGHAN.

## *Lament for Fionavar.<sup>1</sup>*

SHE is rescued from days and hours, she is lost to the years  
     that pass,  
 And the broken pride of her beauty shall lie near the roots of the  
     grass.

In vain dost thou seek to recall her, O Queen, she was weary of  
     war ;  
 Let us bear her away to the peace of the lonely and dream-trodden  
     shore.

Far away, near the haunted Rosses, where the sea shrinks out of  
     the bay,  
 And the world is a purple shadow from the Greenlands to Knock-  
     narea,

Where the sky is above and about us, and the sand crumbles  
     under our tread,  
 And a rain-soft wind from the hills shall soothe the tired eyelids  
     of the dead—

We will fold her round with our pity, we will lay her down in her  
     grave,  
 Fionavar, fairest of women, the daughter of yellow-haired Maeve.

O Mother, how shall we remember, how shall we bear her in  
     mind,  
 A spent lamp lost in the darkness, or a flame that went forth on  
     the wind—

<sup>1</sup> Fionavar was the daughter of Maeve, High-Queen of Connaught. She died on the battle-field, and was carried in the evening to Maeve's tent by the heroes with chants and lamentations.

Is she broken and silent and gone, like the broken string of a lyre,

Or radiant—a child of the lightning—a spirit of music and fire ?

Did she mock at the growing flowers, think scorn of the spring in her pride ?

Though the guardian hills stood dreaming about her she would not abide.

The rain and the wind were her comrades, she left them, she went forth alone,

Now the rainbow's circle is broken, the dreams of the wind overthrown.

She forsook the kind hearth of the world, and the sweetness of things that are,

To build up the pride of her soul on some lonely and perilous star.

She is hidden away from the twilight, her secret is known to none ;  
She has broken her faith with the wind and the sea, she is false to the sun.

EVA GORE-BOOTH.

## *Humours of Eastern Travel.*

WE had been floating down the Tigris for many days ; Baghdad was our destination, Diarbekr had been our starting-point. We were still in the land of the Sultan's irregular troops—the Hamidiyeh. Our friends had been decidedly encouraging as we bade them good-bye : ' You will probably meet with Kurds,' they said, ' but if they do shoot at you, it will only be for the fun of sinking the raft ; they may rob you and strip you, but if you don't resist they won't kill you.' We felt distinctly elated ; we still clung to ideas of life ; our clothes and provisions were a convenience, but no doubt sheep-skins and rice would be always forthcoming if the worst happened. ' What would you mind losing most, X. ? ' I said, as we lay on our backs on the raft, the muddy water rippling very close to our ears, and the muddy banks swinging round as the current changed. ' My hot-water bottle,' answered X. reflectively, ' and you ? ' ' My camera first,' I said, after a pause, during which I had pictured X. alone with the hot-water bottle, ' and then my stylo.' ' Yes,' said X. sympathetically, ' I really don't see how you could get on without them ; but perhaps,' she added consolingly, ' if you persuaded the men that there was an evil spirit inside, they would let you keep them.' This was a decided inspiration ; I booked it for possible contingencies ; a hot-water bottle and a camera were obvious resting-places for the evil eye.

We drifted on ; the whirls of a slight rapid caught us—the top end of the raft where we lay dived suddenly into the water and then rose again ; the bottom end followed suit ; we became bowed for a second, then we were flat once more, and loose things which had started jumping about lay still. I shook the water off my sleeve ; X. stretched out a hand, without turning her head, to feel whether the Oxford book of English verse had been washed away. ' Marshallah, the Pashas like water,' volunteered our boat-

man, a little round-faced Kurd in flowing garments. 'The Pashas are English,' answered Hassan the Turkish dragoman, in a tone of dignified rebuke; 'the English fear nothing; why should they fear water?' The boatman paused in his work; he was plying the two poplar poles which served as oars, with which he guided the raft past shingles and kept it in the open part of the river. He started rolling up a cigarette: 'May it please Allah to spare us from an attack from Ibrahim Pasha,'<sup>1</sup> he said devoutly, 'or even these Pashas may have cause to fear.' Hassan looked at him sternly and with some contempt. 'The Pashas are English,' he repeated, 'and the Pashas are not afraid of Ibrahim Pasha.' Reasons are superfluous to the Oriental mind, statements are conclusive; the boatman lit his cigarette and resumed his task. The two Turkish soldiers who formed our military escort and who had been aroused to a slight attention during the conversation, became listless as before, and puffed away in silence after a simultaneous murmuring of 'Aha! aha! Ibrahim Pasha.' The remaining occupant of the raft, our Armenian cook, alone looked disturbed and uncomfortable. He was continually scouting the horizon, and retired behind the door of the hut whenever a black spot was visible. He burst into roars of forced merriment. 'Ibrahim Pasha! who is afraid of Ibrahim Pasha? let him come and we shall give him a warm welcome!' The Turks gazed in front of them in solid, silent contempt.

Silence reigned again—only the splash of the oars was heard and the beating of the water against the skins. There were 260 sheep-skins in the raft, blown out and tied with bits of string on to two layers of poplar poles fastened together crossways. At one end of the raft were the two huts which served as shelter, made of felt stitched across upright poles; at the other end were bags of merchandise which served as ballast, and on these we stretched our rugs and lay all day. Nothing broke the monotony: the river wound its way slowly in and out round mud-banks; the country as far as one could see was unbroken, endless mud; the water one drank and washed in and floated on was diluted mud; the occasional village on the banks was built of mud, the inhabitants were mud colour; the very sky gave one a feeling of mud; it was time for a diversion. Away in the distance, since early morning, there had been a black smudge on the horizon which was slowly taking more definite shape, as we followed the course of the shiny loops of the river, the one break in this endless

<sup>1</sup> A Kurdish chief. The head of the Hamidiyeh.

monotonous waste. We had lazily fixed our eyes in its direction ; almost imperceptibly it had evolved itself into great masses of solid black limestone rock ; a few more turns of the river and we shot right under them and were suddenly shut inside a narrow black gorge ; bare walls of rock rose straight up on either side, and above a narrow stretch of sky line with its broken edges formed by the turreted ends of rock ; and in a row on every point, silent, motionless, awe-inspiring, sat peering down at us, like sentinels on guard, great brown vultures of the desert. I fidgeted uneasily ; an armed brigand flesh and blood could stand, but this penetrating, undivulging, inhospitable gaze was too uncanny. To appear unconcerned I took out my field glasses and stared back ; with deliberate scorn, and of one accord, they slowly spread out their great wings, shook them and soared up in the air, dropped down the other side of the rocks, or took up a fresh standpoint a little further removed from the intruders. I felt happier ; it was a distinct score. We floated on ; the river was getting dangerous, a wind had arisen and the current was very fast ; there was only just room for the raft to rush between hard, sharp-edged boulders of rock ; it seemed as if every minute we should be dashed to pieces or stranded at an acute angle on one of them.

The soldiers helped with the oars, they and the boatman keeping up one prolonged yell of 'Allah ! Allah !' They exerted themselves strenuously, a strange thing for Turks to do ; the raft creaked and rocked and plunged ; there was a very disturbing sense of fuss and unseemly exertion on board ; the cook was saying his prayers inside ; only Hassan, with an air of total unconcern or even apparent perception of what was going on, was laboriously adding up his accounts ; and X., with equal unconcern, was mending her gloves. On such occasions one thinks of one's past sins and the future ; I thought of the future. I stood up and leaned my back against the wall of the hut to steady myself. 'X.,' I roared above the din, 'I wonder what there is for supper to-night.' X. looked at me with a bored expression. 'The same, I should think,' she said, 'as we had last night, and the night before, and the night before that ; why this sudden interest in your food ?' 'Because,' I said, 'I have an idea I shall enjoy my supper to-night.' 'Yes,' said X. (X. was always sympathetic), 'this sort of weather does make one hungry.' Further conversation was prevented by a sudden leap of water and raft right into the air, and with the leap went up a loud cry to Allah as the men



threw themselves with one great determination on the oars ; we shot head downwards into the dark waters, past the white froth of foam ; there was a moment of turmoil, then everything became very still. The men rested exhausted on their oars ; the sound of roaring waters sounded faint in the distance. I looked round. Hassan was still at his accounts ; X. had finished her gloves, and was lying back with her eyes closed ; the cook's prayers had ceased. We were through. The cook came out rubbing his hands jocosely. 'Arten,' I said, 'your prayers have saved us from some inconvenience.' Arten looked conscious. 'What danger has there been ?' he said. 'Was the Pasha afraid of the waters ?' 'No, indeed,' I returned ; 'it was not the Pasha who was afraid of the waters, but she was afraid she might not get her supper to-night.' 'The Pasha is hungry,' said X. ; 'we must have onions as well as potatoes to-night.' The cook bowed assent and returned to his cooking-pots.

The wind had dropped. A fine drizzle was spitting in the air. The rocks rose less steeply, and a band of green vegetation skirted the banks. Little spurts of glistening water ran out higher up, and, as they dashed down to join the river, shot between masses of ferns or trickled through beds of green moss. It was months since we had seen anything green, and we feasted our eyes and senses on the unaccustomed luxuriance. Oleander bushes with bright red blossoms stood out against the dark rock, water birds darted in and out, and vultures hovered over head. Sentiment was in the air. 'X.,' I murmured softly, 'what does this make you think about ?' 'It reminds me of Scotland,' said X. 'Why—what does it make you think about ?' But I had stopped thinking about it, and agreed that I had seen places like it in Scotland. We were rapidly floating out of the gorge ; already on one side the rocks were giving way to mud-banks, though on the right bank the sides rose steeply in high, jagged cliffs. I lay back with a sense of enjoyment of life and peace ; my thoughts had strayed to western scenes. We turned a sharp bend in the river, and I vaguely noticed a native woman carrying a child in her arms. All of a sudden the atmosphere seemed disquieted. The two soldiers had seized their rifles and dropped on one knee as if marking prey ; even the imperturbable Hassan was handling a dangerous and antiquated-looking weapon. There were men on the shore hailing us, and our boatman was shouting back vociferously. 'Pashas,' said Hassan in a solemn voice, 'put on your hats.' I slowly woke to the situation as I obediently

donned the insignia of our nationality. There were men on each bank; they were armed men, and their arms were pointed at us. 'Why, X,' I exclaimed ecstatically, 'we're held up!' X. looked at me with a pitying expression. 'You've been rather a long time taking that in,' she said. This was not the moment for feeling snubbed; I wished to show that I was now acting with cool deliberation. 'X.,' I said, 'before leaving England we took some trouble with revolver practice. With much inconvenience we conscientiously wore our revolvers all through the wilds of Mesopotamia and Armenia. For some weeks we slept with them loaded under our pillows in the Taurus Mountains; they are now hanging discarded on the walls of the hut. Do you not think the moment has arrived for giving ourselves some little return for all the bother they have been?' 'They have been a bore,' assented X.; 'perhaps it is our duty to have them now.' I went and fetched them and solemnly handed X. hers. 'They are loaded,' I said 'but they seem rather sticky and rusty. I wonder if they will go off.' 'Please point the other way if you are going to try,' said X. I could not allow this challenge to my want of knowledge in firearms to pass, and replied with dignity: 'Remember to aim at the middle of the man; then if you miss his heart you have a chance either way at his head or his legs.' 'I do not think I shall fire,' said X., 'because I cannot do it without shutting my eyes. I will just point.' 'I, for one,' I replied firmly, 'am determined on having a shot at them,' and I unscrewed my Kodak. The river had become very narrow, though the current was slow; the men could keep pace with us at a walk. We were in a cocked hat. I gathered my wits together and debated on chances. The Kurds did not alarm me, but I cast nervous glances at Hassan. 'X.,' I said at last, 'if Hassan fires that blunderbuss he cannot fail to hit either you or me.' X. surveyed the situation critically. 'I don't think it will fire,' she said; 'he was trying to shoot with it one day and it would not go off.' I breathed more freely. 'Effendi,' said one of the soldiers to Hassan, 'tell the ladies to go into the hut.' 'Pasha,' said Hassan, 'you would be more out of the way in the hut.' X. laughed, Hassan laughed, the soldiers laughed, we all laughed—except Arten; he did not laugh—yet. Meanwhile the soldiers and the boatman had been yelling and shouting at the brigands as they kept pace with us on the shore. As they spoke Kurdish we could only wait developments, and were unable to know what negotiations were going on. They were a fine set of men—dark, handsome, well set up, their

long, black curly hair worn down to the collar; they were dressed in bright colours and armed to the teeth with long knives and pistols, besides the rifles they were flourishing.

'There do not seem any villages near,' said X.; 'we shall be very cold if they take our clothes and we cannot get sheep-skins.' 'Yes,' I said, 'and very hungry if we can get no rice. We have longed for this moment, but there do seem to be inconveniences connected with it.' My heart suddenly warmed within me. 'X.,' I said, 'isn't this a splendid piece of luck?' 'Glorious,' said X., and we gave ourselves up to the full enjoyment of the situation.

We had got into a faster bit of current, and the men had to run to keep up with us; they seemed to be yielding to the importunities of our escort: one by one they dropped behind and finally, with a few parting yells, stood and gazed at us as we floated on. Indignation swelled in my veins. 'X.,' I said, in a voice struggling with emotion, 'they are letting us go.' X.'s face reflected my disappointment and disgust. 'And they did not even fire one little shot,' she said bitterly. 'Or try to burst our skins,' I gulped. X. tried to take a cheerful view of the situation. 'Never mind,' she said, 'cheer up, we may have another chance; we are not out of their country yet.' But I was not so easily comforted; I wanted some outlet for my rage and disappointment, and seizing my revolver I fired six shots up into the air and flung the weapon across the raft. The reports rang out loud and clear, and the echoes slowly died away in the answering rocks. Arten's white face peered through a chink in the door. X. turned to the soldiers and demanded of them a full account of their conversation. 'Effendi,' said the officer, 'it is merchandise they want; they dare not touch the personal effects of the English; they have had some good lessons.' 'But,' I interrupted, 'we are loaded with merchandise.' 'Effendi,' said the officer, 'we swore by Allah that it was all your luggage, and that if they took it, the English Padishah would send his soldiers and kill them all.' 'Yes,' broke in the other soldier, 'and we swore that his Excellency the English Consul was on board, and that if they fired a shot he would come out with his great weapon and blow them all into the next world.' The little boatman's face beamed with radiant smiles. 'Ah! the English are a great people,' he said; 'with you English we are safe. I have been down the river scores of times and always at this place I have been robbed. You saw the solitary woman as we turned the corner; she was put there to signal when the rafts were coming; if you see a woman alone

on a bank you know what you are in for. The river here is narrow and the current slow—you have no chance; on the one side the banks are low, and they can draw the rafts on shore and unload the merchandise while the men on the other side high up on the cliffs cover you with their guns.'

'Why do you not carry arms?' we said. The man smiled sadly. 'Pasha, what are we against these men? If we float on they sink the raft by shooting at the skins till they burst and we lose raft and merchandise and all; if we submit quietly they take what they want and let us go peaceably. Should we fire back at the men on the low bank within our range, we are at the mercy of the men on the cliffs who have good ambush. No. Allah wishes it: why should we resist?' There was silence for a few minutes; the Oriental's first refuge from the ills of the world is in his subservience to the will of Allah; his second is in his tobacco: our boatman slowly rolled up a cigarette. 'It is not you English they will harm,' he said, 'they are afraid of punishment. It is we poor ones, who can get no retribution. They take our little all and know we must submit, and they are safe.' 'Surely you can appeal to the local authorities,' we persisted. The man laughed, a low, quiet laugh. 'The Governor!' he said, 'poor man—he is no better off than the rest of us. He has no authority over these Hamidiyeh. Only last week he was set on and robbed himself by a party of them. They stripped him and threw him over a bridge; he was picked up half dead by a passing caravan next day. Aman—it is the will of Allah,' and he took long serene puffs at his cigarette.

During the conversation Arten had emerged from his retreat, and, after casting furtive glances in all directions to make sure of the enemy's absence, he seated himself amongst us on the raft and started winking and giggling. 'Worm,' I said to him in English, a language he did not understand, 'remove your sneaking, sniggering form from out of my sight.' 'Ach, Pasha!' he responded in Turkish, 'we scared them well. We are under the protection of God. Their shots came whizzing round our heads, but none could hurt us; they fell round us in the water like hailstones, and the air was black with them, and when we shot back we left them dying in hundreds on the bank, and they were afraid to follow. Ah, ah! it was a great fight, and we shall be heroes in Stambul.' 'X.,' I said, 'I fear this poor creature's head has been turned with fright; do you think a little quinine would be of any use? We have only that and the eye-lotion left in the

medicine-case.' X. looked at me reprovingly. 'You know you only hate him because he is an Armenian,' she said; 'you will not make allowances for his belonging to a down-trodden race. It is only natural he should boast when he knows what a coward he has been.'

X. was always putting new ideas in my head. I transferred my thoughts from insanity and quinine and looked with fresh interest at Arten; he was a typical specimen of his race, sallow complexion, dark hair and eyes and a huge hooked nose. He was closely buttoned up in a long, thin, black overcoat, which had evidently descended on his shoulders from those of a missionary; on his head he wore a dirty red fez, bound round with a still dirtier coloured handkerchief. He sat crunched up, shivering with cold or fright, and his eyes wandered about uneasily. I looked from him to Hassan, and the contrast was indeed striking. Hassan was the embodiment of strength; there was strength in the massive, well-balanced proportions of his huge frame; there was strength in the poise of his head and in the keen level look of his eyes; there was strength in the quiet repose of his mind and body. If these two men were to be taken as typical specimens of their respective races, one had indeed cause to reflect on the result of one race dominating and crushing another through the course of generations. I sat down to reflect about it. It was getting dusk; the waters were very still; we hardly moved. The sun was setting behind us, and the intense redness of the sky made the rocks underneath look absolutely dead black; the moon had risen and cast a silver glimmer over the dark waters, dark from reflecting the blackness of the rocks; the boatman felt his day's work was over and crooned a low song. We drifted to the shore and made fast the raft with large stones laid on the ropes. A very unsavoury smell of cooking alone kept our thoughts well on the solid earth. Arten appeared at the door of the hut. 'Supper is ready, Pashas,' he said. So we ate our supper that night.

LOUISA JEBB.

## *The Brown Puppy.*

IT is not possible for any man to look dignified with a brown puppy attaching himself sportively to each foot as it carries behind the other in the exercise of walking; there could be no question of dignity, but the man bore the onslaught good-naturedly, for the puppy was so evidently enjoying himself to the top of his bent, with a rapture unknown to mere humanity, that no lover of animals could have refused to lend himself to such exquisite sport. His knitted stocking-heels might have been rent asunder but for the interruption of a clear voice which caused the puppy to desist with a guilty start:

‘Please catch him, and bring him here to be whipped.’

Being naturally kind the man hesitated, but the eyes meeting his over the quickset hedge made scruples ridiculous, so he picked up the aggressor and bore him through the garden gate. The active brown body wriggled in his grasp, but the puppy’s face was stamped with that tragical and wistful innocence which is the crowning glory of the canine race.

‘It was no use my calling him,’ the woman explained. ‘He has no awe of me since he discovered that my bark is worse than my bite. I could frighten him once, large as he is.’

The man laughed as he set the puppy down, and took off his hat to the lady, who had just desisted from using a garden fork and who looked tired.

‘I knew you did not mean to whip him, or I would not have brought him in. What a jolly happy little chap he is!’

‘Isn’t he? Look at him dancing and setting to that great indignant cat who will cuff him the next minute; he is without respect of persons, whether they go on two legs or four. At first his ridiculous youth offended me, but now I should wish him never to grow up into a serious dog with a poll-tax of seven-and-sixpence.’

Her ease of manner was only equalled by her lack of self-



consciousness; the *locum tenens* had never met a woman so untouched by the latter failing—not that his knowledge of life was extensive or his studentship many years behind him. His presence was not permitted to hinder her work, and he took this as permission to stay and talk awhile. He was glad to do this, for Mapledore was dull, and his medical erudition in some danger of rusting for want of use.

As she had repudiated his offered sacrifice of his pipe, he smoked and watched her efforts with an interested eye. Presently after a few remarks of no importance he made a more personal one: 'I know very little about gardening, but are you sure you are on the right track?'

She put the fork aside as one who had earned a little dalliance.

'I am on no track at all. I am carefully avoiding all previous footsteps. All my life until now my gardening has been done for me, and the things have seemed tasteless and uninteresting. My own growing will be so different. Nothing is fully enjoyed until it is purchased with the labours of one's own hands.'

'You may be right there,' he answered grudgingly—which is the masculine way with feminine wisdom. 'What I meant was——'

'I know: you think my garden looks a little mad. It will look more mad when the things come up—as they will unless I am reckoning without the puppy. There will be great novelty of arrangement. I buried a potato here and there whenever the spirit moved me, and I am looking for their resurrection in most surprising places. The peas will appear in fairy rings round feathery crests of carrot tops; and the onions, in serried ranks of green spears, will keep order generally. My garden will be known as The Crookeries; but as a curve is the line of beauty—— Oh, you might laugh, when you see me trying to be so brilliant!'

He smiled instead, for he was not much gifted with humour, and he had been wondering of what her face reminded him. He did not laugh, even to himself, when he decided that she was like the brown puppy: there was the same exceeding brightness and vivacity coupled with the same tragical innocence of regard. Now, in the puppy this look was entirely misleading, for he abounded in the joy of life, with no repentance whatever; as regards the woman the onlooker could not be so certain. Surely over her the winds of God had blown coldly—the winds of God, or else—he did not know, but he was much interested.

'I am quite sure your garden will be one by itself. But supposing nothing comes up?'

'Everything will come up,' she answered confidently. 'I have been generous with the seed, and even my mishandling cannot rob the earth of its quickening power; neither will the sun nor the rain notice that I did not use a garden line.'

'But even then there are slugs and things,' persisted the prosaic young man, who desired to be useful.

'I go slug-hunting by lantern-light at ten every evening. I make a collection on a cabbage leaf, and then the puppy and I convey them as far as the sand-pit. They can't do much harm there, and I do not think they could make the return journey in time for the lettuces, even if they were express slugs.'

'Very likely not—and they would call first upon me. If you take my advice you will hire a man to do this rough work for you.'

'Why?' she asked a little sharply, and her face flushed.

'Because you are not used to it; your wrists are much too slight to lift that heavy fork.'

With an air of relief she regarded her slight hands soiled with honest earth.

'But that is the way to get muscle up. I've always wanted to do such things—to iron my own frocks and wait upon my guests—when I liked them well enough. The old times were best, when even great ladies sat spinning with their maidens, and understood the art of calendering fine linen. Then they served the stranger within the gates with their own hands. Hospitality has lost its grace now that we pay hirelings to perform the least act of service.'

'You may be right; yet if we can afford good servants I do not see why we should not have them. The well-to-do have infinite scope for working off superfluous energy—a forty-mile cycle ride, for instance.'

'A pleasant sort of treadmill exercise; I have always wanted to grind something—to come and go with sticks for my own hearth, and work for my daily bread out under God's sky. The simple life has always been my ideal, with its wholesome self-respect and health of mind and body.'

'And you seem to have attained to your ideal,' he said lightly: 'comparatively few of us do that, you know.'

'I suppose I have, in a sense, yet under conditions, and hardly as a freeholder. I doubt if Damocles had reckoned with

the sword over his head—yet possibly it may have enhanced his feast.'

'She is afraid of poverty, now it has come to her,' he told himself, making a wrong diagnosis, but not committing himself to speech.

'You mean that too much security dulls enjoyment, and robs it of zest. It may be so, although the puppy has not discovered it yet.'

For the puppy, having been soundly cuffed for forward behaviour by the stately cat, had retired in good order to his own playground, decorated with various gnawed bones and all the curiosities of research which only a puppy can unearth in a given area. Much engaged as he was upon a hairless old scrubbing-brush, he could still roll his eye lovingly and roguishly upon his human admirers; he had even a propitiatory wagging tail for the stern cat, and would have loved her too, so full of kindness was that small puppy's large heart, if her vixenish temper would have suffered it. Stooping down, the woman held out her arms and the puppy leapt into them.

'I haven't whipped you yet,' she said softly into one drooping velvet ear. Then she rose and held out a friendly hand.

'Seven o'clock! I must go in and prepare supper, and it is your dinner-hour. You see I know the ways of the gentry.'

'It was quite unnecessary to tell me so. May I come again to see this "Alice in Wonderland" garden?'

'By all means, when you are passing; life is so little without an audience.'

Gathering her tools together, she went indoors with the puppy as train-bearer, and a little later, during the consumption of his employer's tough country mutton, the *locum tenens* asked the housekeeper concerning the ways and means of the lady living at Cherry Cross. Mrs. Lockett, who prided herself upon knowing all there was to be known about any resident in the village, was quite equal to the occasion.

In her own words she informed him that Miss Lester had been at Cherry Cross one month come Whit-Monday, that she had brought an old servant with her who was practically useless through rheumatism; that Miss Lester, with occasional outside help, did most of the domestic duties, and mishandled the garden as only a rash and ignorant person could venture to do. Like an able judge, Mrs. Lockett summed up with no apparent leaning towards the prosecution or the defence.

‘Sarah Lane—that’s her with the sciatics—do say that Miss Lester has no call to do as she does, that it’s just a whimsy, owing to her having been brought up so different. I declare to goodness it wouldn’t be my choice if I’d money coming in reg’lar, as they say it comes to her. Seeing she looked genteel, the gentry had a mind to take her up, but the squire’s wife warned them of that, because one day when she was a’most through the gate to pay a call she saw Miss Lester a-spreading tablecloths to bleach in the sun. She might have been doin’ worse, *I* think; but high-life people has their own notions, so they don’t go a-nighst her now.’

‘Then the loss is theirs. All the same, I doubt if Miss Lester is well off.’

He doubted it still more as he watched her garden growing, for hers was not the calm content belonging to regular dividends and an assured future, although the brightness with which she plied her homely tasks had its great charm for him. And despite its mutiny against accepted formulas and the undisciplined efforts of the puppy to quarry out sepulchres for his bones, her garden grew and flourished.

She may have had that kindly touch which seedlings thrive under, for although they came up an irregular and undrilled squad, no lack of technical skill could retard their growth or make them weaklings. The puppy could enjoy the forest rights of the tall peas and beans waving far above his head, and in such ambushes he would lie in wait for the stately cat, and so ruffle her dignity and her fur by sudden rushes which overturned her into the celery trench that she thought worse of him than ever.

The *locum tenens* found Mary Lester and her dog very entertaining companions, so he went and came with the happy assurance of a free-lance. She told him once that he was lowering his social status by so doing.

‘You have a reputation to lose, whereas I have none. In Mapledore I am quite outside the pale. Could The Crookeries, with its upstart, straying potatoes, belong to a person whom it was desirable to know?’

‘Personally speaking, I would far rather come to The Crookeries, with its delightful surprises, than visit up at the “House,” where it is so dull, and where there is not even a brown puppy to bite my stockings into holes.’

‘We are going to knit you a pair between us, we are so flattered that you like to come and see us. At the suburban villa very few men ever came to see us. I am alluding now to ancient history, when the puppy was not.’

'Why?' asked Kingsford, with the bluntness which good-fellowship had established between them. 'Why shouldn't other men have been just as pleased to come and see you as I am?'

'Because times are changed. You know the dreadful gentility that reigns under the stern eye of a model parlourmaid. Here in Mapledore I can venture to be just myself—for better or for worse. By this horny hand of toil, I swear that I have done with pretending for ever and ever.'

'You should swear by something more substantial. I believe you garden in gloves when no one is looking; your hand looks smaller and weaker than ever.'

He might have added that the healthy sunburn had not tanned her face, with its strange wistfulness which no bright manner could ever hide. As she watched the great flaming sun drawing down towards the ripening earth he wondered anew what shadow was between her and its light. He was rather commonplace, with few inspirations save those belonging to a kind heart; but he was a gentleman, and Mary Lester and the brown puppy had discovered this at the very first attack upon the knitted stockings. She had so obviously forgotten her visitor in watching the splendid glow of earth and sky that she turned apologetically when the puppy thrust himself upon her in triumph to display a tramp's discarded boot, which at great personal risk he had wrested from a bigger dog than himself.

'I am like the little girl who could not believe that this is merely the wrong side of heaven. I also resemble the wicked old man who found this world more than good enough for him. If only that great dazzling sun would take me with it, I should escape the night, and see the Southern Cross put out by a greater glory.'

'The sun is not very long away from us at this time of the year,' he answered cheerfully; 'and you look as if you needed a good night's rest.'

'I think not, for the dark hours seem wasted with a summer so delicious and so brief. It makes me sorry to bid the sun good-night. I would rather see its gold upon the happy fields and shining through the clear still water than be rich in worldly gear. Now you—you think the sun well enough in its way, but your thoughts are fixed upon another sort of luminary—a bright red lamp burning over a brilliant brass plate in Harley Street?'

He laughed quite good-naturedly. 'Naturally they are; it is the romantic ideal of every youthful practitioner who has

managed to scrape through his examinations. But I have as much chance of arriving at Harley Street as your puppy has.'

She looked at the puppy struggling victoriously with the discarded boot, and answered thoughtfully :

'You might have made a more hopeless simile. It is characteristic of the puppy that he always gets what he wants. You might both go there—to Harley Street, I mean. You would do well there, I think, for you are kind, and so many go to a doctor when they are less sick than sorry; you would do them good.'

Not the most conceited man alive could have misinterpreted her words or wrested their wistful simplicity away from the truth. He was not conceited, and he answered in the same spirit :

'If you really felt that, you would let me know what is wrong: even if I could not help you, it might do you good to tell me.'

Her face darkened as though the sinking sun had finally withdrawn its light. After a little pause she answered almost recklessly :

'There is no reason why I should not tell you, especially as you will be leaving in a few days. A little while ago, when I thought I was free to live my life in my own way—such a simple way—I found the sword above my head. I consulted Provis, and he showed it to me; he even told me approximately when it would fall. Now you understand why I think so much of this summer—for it is the last I am to see.'

So this was the meaning of the look upon her face! And the sentence had been pronounced by Provis—the man so famous for never making mistakes. He looked at the thin white hand which no sunburn could brown, and blamed himself for having thought that only the cares of poverty were weighing upon her. He spoke gently, as we do to those under sentence and with no hope of reprieve.

'I wish you had told me this before. Why did you not?'

'Because no one here knows, and I wanted to play at life a little longer—to make believe, as children do.' And then she told him in a few words, and inexperienced as he was he felt that Provis had made no mistake—could have made none—in so simple a diagnosis of incurable ill.

'... It isn't as if I felt much pain—if I did I might be glad it is merely a question of months; but you see I wanted to live—just that! I had no ambition, no wish to get in any one's way; I wanted to enjoy life just as the puppy does. At first I almost hated him because he was so young, so different from me; but now I love



him too much to grudge him anything. You know now why the sun goes down with a splendour for me that others are blind to—why I never want the night to steal the colour from my flowers. I have to snatch at my joys, to reach for them through bars; and as the swift current hurries me away I grasp at each blossoming bough—and it breaks in my hand.'

He wanted so much to say something that was kind and pitying, yet nothing better than a stereotyped professional remark would occur to him.

'But surely you are not carrying out the instructions that Provis must have given you! Your old servant does hardly anything, and merely gives you trouble. You are using no means to prolong life.'

'I know what you mean—that I ought to have stayed in the suburban villa with a white-capped nurse in attendance, and all the paraphernalia of an incurable illness. I couldn't have endured it. I should have had the clergyman calling officially, and it would have shocked him to see the fear of death deepening upon me with each day; for I am afraid—that is why I play at life—why I shall plant bulbs in my garden for a spring that is not for me. In the quiet times I am so frightened of what is coming that I almost want to run and meet it.'

It was as though a child had put a timid hand into his through fear of the darkness, and all that was kindest and most faithful in him responded to the appeal. Wayfarers together for a little space, he wanted to cheer her for those last steps that each must take alone.

'I have no fear that you will do that—I know you far too well. You are only frightened of the shadow; you will be quite brave and hopeful when the call comes. I have seen many die, but so few afraid.'

She watched him earnestly—so earnestly that not even to give her comfort could he have spoken untruly.

'I am thankful to hear you say so. I feel that you would not dare—would you?—to speak peace unless you believed; for you see how soon I *must know*.'

'No,' he answered her simply; 'I would not dare.'

'Please don't think hardly of me for making so much ado about dying—I know it is the common lot, and one ought not to mind; but how I shall miss the pleasant homely things of every day—my little dog who thinks there is no one like me in the whole world! Why couldn't I watch the sowing and the reaping

just a little longer? and what harm would it be if the scarlet poppies flamed for me as well as for others until a few more years had passed?’

‘It pains me to hear you speak so sadly. Remember what you said about this being the wrong side of heaven; try to think of it differently.’

‘I have tried—so hard; but sometimes when I look up past innumerable stars into that nothingness which we call space my soul turns giddy. How lonely it will feel without its accustomed body—how lost in such desolate freedom!’

And with the youth of his own body almost denying its mortality he did not know how to answer her—how to reach the lonely place on which she stood; but his silent sympathy touched her more healingly than any words could have done, and the brave cheerfulness of her voice came back as the puppy rushed in breathless with triumph at having barked the mail cart right out of sight and surprised the driver into reckless language. He was so overjoyed at this piece of mutiny that he could not pretend to be sorry as his mistress took him to task.

‘Puppy, you will do that once too often. You should play with your disreputable scrubbing-brushes; they are safer toys, and will not break you. Who would think that one small body could contain so much delight? You must be very tightly packed, with no room for a good conscience—bad ones take less space.’

Then she turned brightly to her visitor, as one bestowing a favour rather than asking one:

‘As our friendship began with the puppy, I should like it to end with him too. Will you have the reversionary interest of him and his bag of biscuits—when we have to part company?’

He might have promised a greater thing and given less comfort. She bade him good-night so cheerfully that he could scarcely identify her voice with the one which had pleaded so wistfully for the denied gift. Her questions repeated themselves to him often, but there was no answer. Why not for her the sowing and the reaping, the splendid glow of the wild poppies, when there were so many blind and deaf to the simple wholesome joys of life—so many misusing the hours which she spent diligently and to no harmful purpose? He could not answer these questions, and he was only sure of one thing—that Provis had made no mistake.

‘The *locum tenens*, driving back from a case through the early

summer morning, thought the sight and feeling of it worth the sleepless hours.

It was still so early that the dawn had not broken two hours, and the rising sun sent level red-gold rays to pierce the white mist which brooded over fields ripening so fast towards the harvest. In a serene, clear sky the young crescent moon was fading out of sight—the same moon which at its full was to light tired harvesters upon their homeward way. The little breeze which stirs with the dawn had stilled like the twitterings of waking birds, and a beautiful silence refreshed the new day.

Neither indoor nor outdoor servants were astir, so he had to unharness the horse himself. His hands were busy at the first buckle when hurried footsteps made him turn round to encounter the driver of the mail cart, who was breathless with running and very obviously relieved to find the doctor up and out.

'You must come to Cherry Cross—the lady's hurt! That d——d dog of hers got under my wheels, and before I knew it or could pull up she was under them too. I believe she is done for; but she ran to her death, and I only knew what had happened when I felt the wheels jerk.'

The man was so white and frightened that he could scarcely speak, and it was only the consciousness of work to be done that steadied the other from such a shock.

'Where is she?'

'I carried her through the garden gate, and laid her down—she said it hurt too much; then I came for you. There wasn't anyone else about!'

Rebuckling the strap, the doctor told the man to get up, and they drove swiftly off. Knowing that he had a simple restorative with him, he did not go into the surgery for splints and bandages, for an unerring instinct told him there would be no need of them.

He felt that the sudden call had come in mercy to save her those last lingering days which she had so dreaded. His first glance showed him the truth of this, for death was in her face—the peace and aloofness of death without its terror. She knew him, and could speak faintly:

'It does not hurt so much; but, oh, do not touch me!'

There was little need to move her, and he checked the man, who wanted to be useful without knowing how.

'There is nothing you can do here. Go into the house and rouse the servant.'

Watching his face, she understood ; she may have done so from the first.

‘Then this is the last chapter—the last page?’

‘Yes ; but you are quite brave and not frightened?’

There was nothing professional in his kindness, for this was a parting between dear friends, and her vision was clearer than his as she looked round wistfully before answering :

‘I don’t think I am afraid. It is morning, and I am out among my flowers. Those level sunbeams seem a kindly way for a lonely soul. I am a little sorry, but not afraid.’

So he stayed by her in the garden which she had planted so irregularly and yet by the law of love. Every old-fashioned dewy flower breathed fragrance, and the warmth of the ascending sun touched her white face and the whiteness of her lilies, revealing a glory in each. The brown puppy, unscathed and merry with his toys, was quite unheeding of what he had done—in a few more months he might have understood and broken his heart with grief—and presently came bounding to her side, and a whimsical smile dawned in her brave eyes.

‘I can’t whip you, Puppy ; that is all done with. As a big dog you will not remember what a naughty little dog you were once—I am glad about that.’

Then she addressed the man who was guarding her so carefully from the puppy’s ignorant and ecstatic affection.

‘It was pure accident ; the man did not see, and I had no time to think. Perhaps God meant that—to give me no time—to become afraid——’

Mary Lester had left the *locum tenens* more than the brown puppy, and although he did not reach Harley Street he was near enough to it for prosperity. As she had foretold, his kindness of heart served him better than more brilliant attainments, and those who were more sorry than sick found his counsel and sympathy very helpful. His wife drove out with a handsome St. Bernard in her carriage, but he himself never took the briefest holiday without one old and loving friend—an Irish terrier who was called in age, as he had been in youth, just ‘the brown puppy.’

ELLEN ADA SMITH.

## *Rahel Varnhagen.*

*THE GERMAN SIBYL OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.*

**R**AHEL VARNHAGEN stands at the tumultuous close of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, a notable figure among the women of her time and nation. It was a time of which Gutzkow complained: 'The misfortune of this period is that the women are so far behind the men,' and 'the relations between men and women are a perfect caricature,' so that the few women like Goethe's Bettina and Rahel the Jewess stand out all the more sharply from their sisters of the German Hausfrau ideal. Friendships such as Rahel had with the notable men of her day; letters such as she wrote to these friends, frank expressions of her ideas and aspirations, were something unheard of until then in Germany; she was, as it were, the first of her sex to speak out plainly and declare her own individuality. And although she possessed no creative gifts, either literary or artistic, yet the force of her life and personality was such as to win for her the title 'The Sibyl of the Nineteenth Century.'

Two things are noticeable in Rahel Varnhagen, apart from her winning personality, from the charm of wit and manner which can only be realised by contemporaries: first, her passionate devotion to the Freedom movement which was animating Young Germany at the time; and, second, her marvellous intellectual appreciation and adoration of Goethe. This appreciation is wonderful indeed, when we remember that her recognition of the poet was so entirely the prompting of her own nature; that even as a mere girl, alone, she grasped and comprehended the significance of a genius as yet unknown to the majority, as yet only understood by a few. Quite alone, a mere girl, studying in her own little 'attic,' her nature responded intuitively to the master soul and, long before the world said it, she declared him boldly to be beyond compare the highest, greatest, only poet.

'A new volume of Goethe,' she says, writing of her girlhood, 'was a festival to me, a beautiful, splendid, beloved, honoured guest, who opened for me new gates of life, of unknown bright life. *My Poet.*'

When Rahel was twenty-three years of age she met Goethe at Carlsbad and charmed him by her sympathy and *esprit*. 'A beautiful soul,' Goethe calls her, 'harmonious—the more one knows her, the more one is attracted and lovingly held. A girl of rare understanding, who really thinks and feels—where can one find such another? Oh! we were constantly together, very friendly and intimate with each other. One admires her great originality, and even her originality is lovable.' As for the little Jewess she said simply: 'I worship him,' yet afterwards she made no attempt to force a continuance of the sympathetic friendship which must have meant so much to her. Some years later a friend sent Goethe some of her notes on his poems, without revealing her identity. The poet was surprised at their insight and said it must be a very wonderful nature which understood him so thoroughly, yet even then Rahel would not allow him to be told who had written the notes. She took a certain pride in her reserve, keeping, as she said, 'a pure shrine' for the poet in her heart, unknown and unrecognised, perhaps in contempt of the women who worshipped the great Olympian's very human personality and flung themselves at his feet. She does not seem to have met Goethe again until some twenty years later, when the unkind fates accorded a short, disappointing interview—an interview which had even a ludicrous side.

In the twenty or more intervening years Rahel had known vicissitudes, had loved more than once, and had married late in life after a long engagement. She was, in fact, forty-two at the time of her marriage with Varnhagen von Ense, and not until three years later did the eventful meeting take place. It was in August 1815 that Goethe came to Frankfort, and, hearing of the whereabouts of his sympathetic friend of former years, honoured her with a visit. At a quarter past nine in the morning the great man arrived, unexpectedly. Rahel was not yet dressed. Should she receive him *en négligé* or keep him waiting? Hastily throwing herself into a black wadded dressing-gown, 'sacrificing myself so as not to keep him waiting five minutes,' she rushed to receive her distinguished visitor. But the feeling of 'unloveliness' made her shy and awkward, Goethe was polite and unbending, the visit was short and constrained. The black wadded dressing-gown



spoilt it all, and one can only sigh for the ruined interview which slipped away for ever in the shadow of that unlovely garment. As for Rahel, she wrote to her husband that 'after he had gone, I dressed myself very carefully, as if to make up for it, to mend the matter! a pretty white dress with a high collar, a lace cap, lace kerchief, the Moscow shawl. . . . ' The touch of feminine vanity atones for the suspicion of priggishness which peeps out in her complacent perception of what was really due to the great man—namely, punctuality.

The story of her life is interesting as a reflection of the times in which she lived. She was born on Whitsunday 1771, the eldest daughter of the Jewish banker Marcus Levin. A child of delicate nervous organisation, she suffered acutely under the household tyranny of her father, who cherished the old Jewish idea of the father's absolute rule and kept his family trembling before his outbursts of wrath. Rahel suffered intensely, as a sensitive child would, under this *régime*. In a letter, written when she was about sixteen, she says 'if our mother were to die death would certainly be the best thing for us. I, at least, should prefer it.' She describes her lonely hours spent in a little room at the top of the house, which she was allowed to use as her own study: 'My attic, where I lived, loved, suffered, rebelled. Learnt to know Goethe! Grew up with him, adored him unspeakably.' Her position as a Jewess was the source of many humiliations, although it brought her exceptional advantages in the way of education and intercourse. The Jews were bitterly hated, as ever, by the Germans, and even the richest Jewish families were seldom received in German circles. They formed a society apart, and to this very circumstance Rahel Levin owed the exceptional position she took as leader of a *salon* both before and after her marriage.

Henriette Herz has described how the Jewish women in their rich luxurious dwellings, whilst their husbands and fathers were busy in shops and counting-houses, enjoyed almost unlimited leisure for study. They formed circles for reading literature and philosophy among themselves, Racine and Voltaire in French, Shakespeare in English; they learnt Italian in order to read Dante in his own tongue. Such women, with their quick Oriental minds, cultured and refined, were really the New Women of their epoch. Their houses were frequented by men of note and by the intellectual among the young aristocrats, attracted by the charm of intelligent sympathy and cheerful *sans gêne* which were too often lacking in their own homes. ('Schloss Langeweile' some

one dubbed the German aristocratic circles of the day, presided over by a dull routine and narrow forms of etiquette.) Among Jews of this cultured type Rahel Levin grew up to become the most brilliant and intellectual woman of her time and nation.

She, a simple girl of the *bourgeoisie*, without particular beauty or riches, contrived to have and to hold a circle of friends and a *salon* which was by far the most brilliant and attractive in Berlin. Royal princes, ambassadors, artists, learned men, poets, countesses, actresses—all came. Prince Louis Ferdinand of Prussia, nephew of Frederic the Great, was one of her real intimate friends. He was a young man of uncommon personal beauty and intellect, and he confided in Rahel as in his dearest friend, she treating him in return with the greatest frankness and sincerity, advising or blaming him, as she says, 'not in the least as if he were a prince.' A. von Humboldt, Schlegel, Schleiermacher, Fichte, Gentz, Brinckmann, all were her friends.

It was quite an honour and an event for strangers in Berlin to be presented to the 'Demoiselle Levin,' as a French gentleman records in his memoirs, struck with admiration for his fair hostess, her charm of manner, her wit, her kindness of heart.

The Jews, it is said, have given *esprit* to the Germans, and Rahel was the first brilliant incarnation of this *esprit*, which culminated in Heine. Countless witticisms and epigrams from her lips became national property and exercised the widest influence upon the life and art of her day, all the more because she was so absolutely in touch with the aims and aspirations of Young Germany, its patriotism, its longing for freedom, its Goethian cry of 'Light, more light!'

She had a fine contempt for the people who lived for what she called the 'is-it-proper morality' ('es-schickt-sich-Moral'), their contentment with the material things of life, their talk of things which 'we' left off discussing ten years ago. 'How very few people have ideas!' she sighs.

Her letters are full of reflections and little philosophies of life, which show a real insight into human nature.

'We are really what we wish to be and not what we are.' 'If one listens to the conversation of passers-by in the street, one seldom hears anything but complaints or boasts. All men really aspire to a more worthy and dignified existence; if they do so sincerely, they complain, if falsely, they boast.' 'What makes us really so very unhappy is that we cannot make up our minds not to be happy. But once we have been driven to this point, old age

suddenly comes upon us : we no longer trouble ourselves about the Infinite, but take our share of life and live, as the saying is, for the moment. Tears, splendour, and rage are over ; we become stiff, kindly disposed, and wrinkled. Old age comes suddenly and not by degrees (as we fancy), like all true knowledge.'

She aimed in herself at finding what she called Unity in Life, feeling how much the young minds of her day suffered from being torn asunder by conflicting aims. 'I am at one with myself and consider myself a good, beautiful gift. I am free within myself, not bound to the earth.' Her own youth had its storms and trials. She suffered acutely from the prejudice of the Germans against the Jews, and although she was not ashamed of being a Jewess she felt bitterly the social degradation of a large portion of her race. Speaking of many good gifts which had fallen to her in life she says bitterly : 'But Fate added, "Be a Jewess," and now my whole life is a wound.' For this reason she had to break off her engagement to a young nobleman named Finckenstein, to whom she was deeply attached. The young man himself was too weak to take a decided course, he even told Rahel how difficult it was for him to choose between her and his family, and naturally Rahel set him free.

A few years later she fell in love with a handsome young Spaniard named D'Urquijo. He, however, was afflicted with true Spanish jealousy and could not bear to see her beloved and admired by so many, as she was in her circle. He tormented her with mad scenes of jealousy and reproaches until, at the cost of great suffering to herself, she broke off this second engagement.

Varnhagen describes her at their first meeting as small but well formed, with tiny hands and feet, dark eyes and hair, and a beautiful voice. 'The most wonderful way of speaking I had ever heard, naïve and witty, keen yet loving, true and warm-hearted.'

Her meeting with Madame de Staël deserves to be recorded. Brinckmann the poet had spoken of his friend Rahel with enthusiasm, as a genius. 'Ah ! you compare her with me ?' said Madame de Staël, amused. 'That is not bad ! Has she written anything ?' 'No, nor do I believe that she ever will ; but I wish she could inspire twenty authors with her genius, some of them would be the better for it.' Madame de Staël naturally wished to make the acquaintance of this 'marvel,' and they met at an evening reception, crowded with princes, learned men, Court

ladies, poets. Disregarding these, the two ladies sat on a sofa and talked together earnestly for no less than an hour and a half. Madame de Staël then said: 'She is wonderful! Germany is really a mine of genius, as I have remarked during this journey of mine.' (She was travelling in Germany and met Rahel in Berlin.) And to Rahel herself she said: 'If I stayed here, I should envy your superiority,' to which the clever little Jewess replied by a neat compliment capable of disarming any and every form of feminine jealousy. Her own estimate of the great Frenchwoman shows her remarkable insight into character, one of her strongest points. 'She has intellect enough, but her soul never *listens*. It is never still within her. She never seems to meditate alone, but always to be talking about it to others; those early *salons* have done her harm. . . . Everything about her is *à rebours*, as when one strokes blades of grass upwards, nothing sweet or gentle. Among so many gifts it is a pity that one is lacking, the one which could make her harmonious: the gift of a quiet simple soul-atmosphere.'

The above extract gives an idea of Rahel's way of writing, of her style of expressing herself both in speaking and writing. Above all things she was natural, clear-headed, and simple in a most affected and unnatural period. She tried to write and speak exactly as she felt, without pedantry (for of this she had the greatest horror)—in short, as clearly and simply as possible.

'I don't wish to write speeches but conversations, as they are carried on by living people,' by which she meant, to write down ideas and moods just as they came, letting the style form itself. She had learnt the art of conversation in Paris and regretted that the Germans knew nothing of it—that their language was, as she says, not moulded by social intercourse like the French. And her influence was felt in this respect of the moulding of the German language both conversationally and in writing.

After her mother's death and before her marriage she passed through dreary years, alone and poor, 'sitting alone in the morgue of my heart,' as she expresses it—during the terrible period of the German struggle with Napoleon. But she writes at last, 'Since I have no more hope for the beauty of life, and have lost or had to give up all that was dearest to me, I no longer feel so keenly unhappy, and I can look upon beautiful objects in Nature with real understanding. . . . My birth shut me out of the world, happiness would not let me in. I hold for ever fast to the strength of my own heart and the teaching of my soul'

This was the philosophy of her saddest days.

Her letter written on the death of Heinrich von Kleist, the poet, who shot himself in despair at the failure of all his attempts to make even a bare living in this period of national distress, is very characteristic :

‘ You know how I think of suicide : as you do. It is not well that men, wretched men, should have to suffer to the very drags. We must hope in Divine love. Could *that* be made to cease by a mere pistol-shot ? I am glad that my noble friend—for with bitter tears I claim him as a friend—would not suffer an indignity ; he has suffered enough, and not one of those who will perhaps blame him would have given him ten thalers, would have sacrificed nights to him, or have had patience with him, if he had let them see his misery—would never have left off calculating whether he had a right, or whether he really had *not* a right to a cup of coffee. . . . He is and remains a Courage.’

Her marriage to Varnhagen von Ense, a man much younger than herself, but of the same intellectual and literary tastes, was a very happy one. He thoroughly understood and appreciated her, and during the nineteen years of their happy married life their *salon* was, like that of Rahel’s early life, the meeting-place for social stars of every kind. Fichte, Hegel and his disciples, the poet Heine, De la Motte Fouqué, the Mendelssohn family adorned this later *salon*, which Rahel called her ‘ old company of the attic, continued and enlarged.’ Childless herself, she adored children, and her greatest delight was to have her nephews and nieces to play with. The once impetuous Bettina, Goethe’s ‘ child,’ now the worthy mother of seven, in engaging a governess expressly stipulated that she should be ‘ exactly like Madame Varnhagen with the children,’ and a letter of Rahel herself, written about two years before her death, speaks of the ‘ children to dinner for a birthday party, and Dore (the old servant) sitting at table too, because she has been ill. *Voilà mes fêtes !*’

As regards her own sex Rahel had ideas far in advance of her time and suggested a University education for women long before such a thing existed even in dreams. She thought that women had a right to work as citizens, and that social economy was, above all, a suitable sphere for their activity. When some one considered that a literary woman had ‘ missed her true vocation’ Rahel exclaimed : ‘ Granted ! So many women miss their true vocation that the few who miss it by writing may well slip in among the rest. There is no need to pity them more than those others who

have but little pity bestowed on them.' And she had a beautiful saying that 'all mothers should be held in honour and innocent—like Mary.'

She died in 1832 at the age of sixty-one, and a year later most of her letters were published by her husband under the title *Rahel, a Book of Remembrance*, a book which was received enthusiastically. Many of her aphorisms had been published during her lifetime by Fouqué in his weekly paper under the heading *Aus Denkbüchern einer Berlinerin*.

Her ideal of life forms a not unworthy epitaph to her own: 'To see, to love, to understand, not to wish for anything, to be simply resigned, to revere the great Being, not to be ever improving, inventing, and hammering, to be merry and to grow better.'

MARY HARGRAVE.



## *At the Sign of the Ship.*

A WEEK or two ago I was reading *The Antiquary*, amused by Monkbarns's powers of self-deception. The author himself once found a helmet in the ruined chapel of Buccleugh, on Rankleburn, but had to yield to the theory of the Ettrick Shepherd that the prize was an old metal pot that had held tar for sheep, or so the Shepherd tells us. A few days after finishing *The Antiquary*, I came across a Portuguese journal of archæology, *Portugalia* (i. iv., 1903), and found myself first at a fray likely to be more prolonged and important than the feuds between Monkbarns and Mac-Cribb.

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The question of forgery or fraud is raised, on a large scale, by the contents of *Portugalia*. Two learned priests, Fathers Rodrigues and Brenha, have found a wilderness of totally unexpected and very odd objects under the floor of certain dolmens in the rural province of Traz-os-Montes. Nothing is so dangerous to a man's character as to find things which antiquaries never heard of before, and never wished or expected to discover. If the finder is a mere amateur, then he is obviously a poacher on the Monkbarns estate, and the hands of official *savants* are against him. He is accused of 'faking' the novelties himself, or of having been imposed on by local humourists, who, to do them justice, are wonderfully quick at mocking the spectacled archæologist. But if the finders are themselves of the brotherhood, like Fathers Brenha and Rodrigues, then their mates are not sorry, from professional jealousy, to give them the choice of being knaves or gulls.

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It is an old story, now, the finding, by Dr. Schliemann, of what he boldly called 'The Treasure of Priam,' at Hissarlik, or Troy, in 1874. Dr. Schliemann was an enthusiastic amateur, no scholar. He noticed some ruins on the hill of Hissarlik, which he declared to be Troy. He went and dug, and had the impudence to find a strange large copper object in the middle of

ancient cinders. Behind it he thought he caught the glitter of gold. Now Dr. Schliemann was in a quandary. He had no European witnesses, except his wife. He could not trust the local peasants with gold, so he gave the signal for luncheon. The workmen retired, and the doctor, with a knife, howked out a treasure of gold and silver cups and vases, with a diadem, and dozens of earrings, bracelets, buttons, and so forth, of gold, silver, or electron. The ornaments and plate were of unfamiliar forms. Dr. Schliemann handed them to his wife, a young lady, 'my dear wife' he called her in his report, and she wrapped them up in a great piece of cloth and carried them away. I repeat there were no unbiased witnesses. The newspapers were full of the wondrous tale. 'Europe was wringing with it,' as the young buccaneer says in *The Human Boy*. Professed archæologists gnashed their teeth.

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Among these one of the most eminent was M. G. de Mortillet, the great authority on prehistoric man in France, and on many other matters. He said that the doctor's report must be studied without party feeling, and he began by stating, in the most impartial way, that 'every excavator must be struck by the impossibilities of the narrative.' Therefore the doctor must be a liar, and M. de Mortillet, like all scientific men, must know the bounds of the possible and impossible. Diggers, especially Asiatic diggers, cannot be whipped back when gold is in view. Dr. Schliemann had not said that the diggers saw the gold *que l'on remarquait*. Dr. Schliemann was the 'one' who saw the precious metal, at least he says so in his English book. At all events, his tale could not possibly be true. 'How again,' asked M. de Mortillet, 'could the doctor's "dear wife"' (he harped on the phrase) 'carry away the things during the lunch of the diggers?' The doctor must have observed the easily detected character of his fable, for he proceeded to draw a red herring across the trail by talking of the 'owl-headed idols' he found, which really were primitive figurines of women with no mouths, a type now known to be very common in early art, from the caves of Australia to the illuminations of the *Celtic Book of Deer*. The attention of *savants* was drawn away to these objects. That was the essential thing to do. One may be a *savant* without being too innocent. Still, there were doubts. To meet these, the newspapers were made to say that golden jewels like those of the treasure had been found by the Turkish police in the possession of the doctor's workmen. A very

likely story! The diggers would have sent the ornaments to the melting-pot. Besides, the doctor declared that 'his dear wife' had carried the precious objects away. And M. de Mortillet ended with the good old tag:

*timeo Danaos et dona ferentes,*

Mrs. Schliemann being a Greek.

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It was gallant and generous, was it not, this of the French official archæologist? And it was safe to give the lie to a retired grocer, on the other side of Europe. M. de Mortillet wrote in *l'Anthropologie* (iii. 172-174). If you look for Dr. Schliemann's reply in the index, you are directed to p. 542. It is not there. Under 'Troyes,' however (why 'Troyes'?), you find a reference to p. 562. The doctor had read M. Gabriel de Mortillet's remarks 'with the most profound surprise.' He did not know much of antiquaries, so he was astonished. The objects which he discovered had been examined by M. Emile Burnouf, director of the Ecole Française at Athens, by the French Ambassador, by M. Barthélemy de Saint-Hilaire, and by Mr. Newton, of the British Museum, notoriously one of the foremost of European scholars. Mr. Newton wrote a report in *The Academy*, February 14, 1874. Herein he said 'some few persons have received Dr. Schliemann's narrative with scornful incredulity, and have insinuated that the gold and silver ornaments were fabricated at Athens, or that they were purchased by Dr. Schliemann in some other part of Asia Minor, and associated with the antiquities from Ilium Novum. In other words, they consider his story of the finding of a treasure as altogether apocryphal. I think it right to say that, from the day I first saw the photographs of Dr. Schliemann's antiquities and read his narrative, I entertained no doubt whatever as to the genuineness of the objects found, nor did his account of the mode of his discovery suggest to me any doubt as to the truth of his statements.' On examining the actual objects, Mr. Newton's favourable opinion was confirmed. Moreover, it was true that, three months before the doctor's discovery, two of his men had found and stolen smaller assortments of jewellery, as an ambassador and M. Burnouf attested. The things were now in the Museum of Constantinople.

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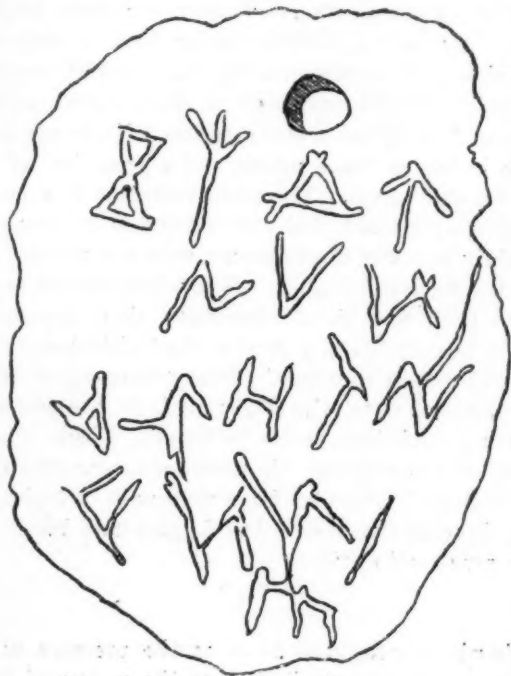
M. de Mortillet replied that the doctor's letter was but another example of his system of advertisement (*réclame*). 'In

face of what he says and what he does I can only maintain my conclusions; prudence is the mother of safety.' In France, had Dr. Schliemann not been an elderly grocer, M. de Mortillet might not have found 'safety' except in his skill with the small sword or the pistol. In fact, he did not find archæological salvation. He was so resolute not to be *naïf* that he tricked himself into denying veritable and verified discoveries, which opened a new field of scientific knowledge. The cruelty of Nemesis has taken a posthumous revenge by allowing the Louvre to be gulled by the sham Tiara of Saitaphernes, instantly spotted by German acuteness: it is the work, mainly, of a modern Russian jeweller, copying ancient models. In this case the motive of the forgery was money; the sham was sold at a great ransom. Dr. Schliemann's motive would have been to prove, by forgery, that Troy was an historical city, and that he had found it. For that purpose he would have bought, or had made, Græco-Phœnician jewels and plate, not things such as no archæologist had ever seen. This fact, so obvious, does not seem to have occurred to his accusers.

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After this little lesson from real life, let us return to our Portuguese discoverers. They are both enthusiastic antiquaries. Their motive for fraud would be vanity, I presume, and the desire to be talked about, for silver or gold or any other metal they did not find. Or they would forge for the fun of the thing, or, again, to prove that man of the dolmen age possessed alphabetiform written characters in the Peninsula—a theory maintained by the eminent archæologist Da Veiga. Vanity, humour, or the proving of a point are all possible human motives. That they should carry away captive two priests of unstained character I must deem morally improbable; nothing is morally impossible. One priest I could fancy doing such a mad act, or one layman; two priests are 'one too many if not two,' as Mr. Harris said of Mrs. Harris's last. But take the other alternative; the priests were gulled by a local humourist, who filled the ground, under a kind of pavement within the dolmen, with hundreds of extraordinary objects. An aggrieved parishioner, or a dissenter, may have taken this liberty with the churchmen, who would not recognise a sham pavement and recently disturbed soil. Now, there *were* aggrieved parishioners. They fancied that gold was in the dolmens, they disturbed the reverend diggers, and they tried to

sell what they found in the country town, Villa d' Aguiar. To the hypothesis of the aggrieved parishioner and local wag, it is replied that, in this remote district, no such person was likely to have the necessary knowledge. Any one who knew palæolithic art might so far imitate it as to do rude scratches of deer, in the style of the pictographs of the Red Indians, the most childish linear designs, quite unlike the beautiful art of palæolithic man. The jester must have known this much, also that neolithic man in Prussia used amulets of amber, some marked with little cups, while others are like Shakespeare's mannekin, 'made after supper out of a cheese-paring,' odd stiff figures of men and women. Such figures our knowing local wag made in the granite stone of the Portuguese district, much harder to work than amber or shale, so that the dollies are armless: in Prussia the arms, hanging close to the body, are rudely indicated. The local wag also knew enough about the ancient alphabetiform characters of Caria, prehistoric Egypt, Crete, and the Peninsula, to inscribe them on stone amulets, small oblong pieces, with a hole for a string I give an example:



It is trying the local jester rather high to expect him to have known all this, and forged all these things before 1894-95, when the Reverend Fathers dug, and when the researches of Mr. Flinders Petrie and Mr. Arthur Evans had not reached their present point, and, perhaps, were not very familiar to remote and rural but aggrieved parishioners. For these reasons I dismiss the theory of the local wag, like the hypothesis of the two false priests. The local wag did not know enough. Therefore, if there is fraud, it must be the fraud of some fairly clever and knowing Portuguese antiquary, perhaps a free-thinker, who, at great trouble and some expense, constructed a cartload of queer scratched and cupped and inscribed stones, and dumped them down in two or three dolmens, all to poke fun at the Church. He has got his fun now, for Don Ricardo Severo has written a long and erudite article on the commodities, which he and other *savants* whom he called to council regard as genuinely antique. They are the queerest grotesque unlikely things in the world, and one design may represent a rhinoceros with two horns (no such beast was contemporary with the dolmen builders in Portugal) or, as several observers prefer to believe, may be meant for a boar. He has huge bristles on his back, in any case. The female dollies in stone are, granting the material, very like other *poupées* which neolithic man made in shale, amber, and pottery in many places, for religious or other reasons. No metals were found, but stone knives or lance points, and a great deal of pottery in small sherds and scraps. The whole collection is almost (I think not altogether) unexampled and heterodox in Europe. There will certainly be a war of antiquaries over the matter, and I am sorry for the Reverend Fathers. They, like grocers, cannot fight duels, but their foes should remember that they can 'do the Curse,' like the Archbishop in the *Mort d'Arthur*, 'in the best manner and the most orguilous.' Bishop Kennedy, of St. Andrews, brought down his man, the Tiger Earl, in one year exactly, by daily cursing, and, like Lesley le Balafré, I will give gold for anathemas on the sceptical 'in whatever manner the Church can best get at them.' Not that I can venture at so high and deep a hazard as denying that the clerical diggers have been 'bit,' but I like their pluck and spirit.

\* \* \*

People who dig ought to do so in the presence of a worthy magistrate, a geologist, ten Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries,



Mr. Sherlock Holmes, and Mr. Maskelyne, the conjurer. Otherwise, to find anything unexpected is as dangerous to the character as to see a ghost. But there is no safety. I say, for example, that a site which I have found is neolithic: B, who did not find it, says that it is of the bronze age. If I find neolithic things, B says I put them there, but if a bronze thing turns up, I am not allowed to say that B dropped it there, 'and the same with intent to deceive.' The hostile spectator is above the suspicion which falls on that very dubious character the discoverer. There will never be an end of the Portuguese war, unless a sceptic finds the same sort of things himself. And even then, I deeply regret to say that some finders are capable of keeping their finds dark, if out of harmony with their theories. Some one found a curious figurine of a woman in the caves at Mentone, and the person whom he consulted advised him to destroy it, 'as it made the caves too recent,' whereas, really, it rather suggested the opposite inference. For my part, when in doubt, I hope that discoverers are honest, and the more unexpected the object found, the less likely I deem it to be forged, speaking generally. It is certainly better to say nothing than to write like M. Gabriel de Mortillet; indeed, I would liefer be duped, and own the fact (it has befallen better men), than bring railing accusations. But then I am not an official authority, with a reputation to lose, and always in a twitter of fright about that inestimable possession.

\* \* \*

I hope the following story of a successful fake is true, especially as, this time, the victim was a very learned German. There was exhibited, not long ago, a set of Greek works of art, in which there was an object in terra-cotta. Who owned it, or what its pedigree was, who found it, when, and where, I do not know. These, of course, are important points. This work of art was very highly praised by the German *savant*, and of this fact I was ignorant. But, visiting the place of exhibition with a lady, we observed the work of art, and I ventured to observe, 'Made in Germany!' I am acquainted with the Teutonic copies of Tanagra figurines, and thought that I recognised the Teutonic thumb. Now I am told that many good judges were dubious, that they examined the work of art, applying all sorts of tests, and finally—O Sherlock Holmes!—that they found a portion of the cuticle of the human hand burned into, or otherwise adhering to, an ancient fracture of the clay. Now, the cuticle of a potter dead some 2300

years ago would not persist till now, and a most unfavourable inference as to the genuineness of the object was drawn. So the story says, but the mere look of the thing was as modern as may be.

\* \* \*

By December 19, we are told in circulars, the *Times* will no longer assure us that we once showed some inclination to buy the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and that now or never is our chance to get it cheap. I certainly never nibbled at the bait, but I got the circular. The 19th of December will be a happy day if circulars are really to cease. In the spirit of Keats I sing :

On the Nineteenth of December,  
Oh happy, happy we !  
We need no more remember  
The *Encyclopédie* !  
The *Times* no more will cry it,  
But booksellers supply it,  
And any one may buy it ;  
But I will not be he.

\* \* \*

Consulting the *Encyclop. Brit.* lately, one seemed to have lost one's reason. I looked up 'Alphabet,' and there was a long article on the subject, about twenty-five years out of date. There was a table, showing the Egyptian hieratic characters, and the Phœnician characters supposed to be based on the Egyptian, but no more like them than chalk is like cheese. Later I again took up the same volume, as I supposed, but under the head 'Alphabet' found no article at all, only 'See *Writing*.' So I saw 'Writing,' a good up-to-date article, based on the discoveries of Mr. Petrie and Mr. Arthur Evans. One seemed to have been dreaming. But, really, on the second occasion I had got hold of one of the *new* volumes, including an article on 'Women,' by Lady Jeune. I do not think that there is an essay upon 'Men,' but woman is beginning to assert herself.

\* \* \*

The following examination paper has been sent to me by an intimate friend :

HUMOUR UP TO DATE.

By the Authors of *Wisdom while you Wait*.

1. 'John Banyan, author of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, took his

name from the circumstance that his father's smithy was under a spreading Banyan tree.' (P. 82.)

Would it not be equally funny to say that '*The Pilgrim's Progress* was by Bunnion, an ally of Mr. Richard Cobden in his crusade against the Corn Laws'? Would either remark be worthy of Corne Tooke?

## 2. Rhyming Reminders.

'When the glass is low, oh Lork,  
There'll be rain in Kerry and Cork.'

To which of the two authors do you attribute this Irish witticism? State your reasons, linguistic or meteorological, for preferring to read:

When the glass is low, oh very!  
There'll be rain in Cork and Kerry.

Estimate the value of either text, if contributed to the humorous column of the *Globe and Traveller*. State the market price of either jest in the early days of Charles Lamb.

3. 'Sir H. H. Howorth's *History of the Mongrels*.' Restate this piece of humour in the original form, giving the date, if possible, and naming the publisher of the *History of the Mongols*, with any remarks on Turgot's legislation as to chestnuts in Corsica.

4. 'When you meet your doctor . . . be careful to resist the temptation to put out your tongue unless he asks you.'

Quote the source of this jape, name the artist who illustrated it (in *Punch*), and compare the Maori form of the witticism, as given in Mr. Haddon's *Evolution of Art*, Plate VI., figure 10.

5. (Candidates for 'Divvers' must answer this question, subject to a fine of 5*l.*)

'Herr Sandow has long bestowed personal attention upon a special Gaza class in which instruction is given in the art of bodily removing such fixtures as pillar-boxes.'

Explain why 'Gaza,' with remarks on the postal system in ancient Philistia.

6. '*Dinna forget*, S. R. Crockett.' To what clan's motto is the reference? Render it into Latin, and illustrate from *The Lost Pibroch*.

7. 'Lord Rosebery (when indisposed), Primrose 'Ill.'

Explain this joke, giving the earliest name of Primrose Hill, and your opinion as to the verdict in the case of Hill, Green, and Berry.

A copy of the Christmas number of the *Strand* will be presented, on application to the present writer, to the competitor most successful in answering this paper.

\* \* \*

Who does not love 'Literary Intelligence'?

'Mr. Edward Jones hopes to have his new novel finished by the end of the month.

'Mr. Poseidon Hickes is contemplating a new sonnet. Though the subject is not yet announced, those intimate with Mr. Hickes assure us that it will be "colossal."

'We learn that there is severe American competition for the serial rights of Miss Blenkinsop's new novel, *The Veteran*. In the first and third parts the scene is laid in South Africa, in the second part in Kamschatka. Miss Blenkinsop here breaks new ground, introducing us to the *vie intime* of the Eskimo, or Inuit, as they prefer to be called. The main interest is the love of Tant Mœ, a Hottentot woman of fifty, for John Bunting, the Finnish captain of a whaler. The novel is not political.

'*"Bonnets I have Worn"* is the title of a series of essayettes which Miss Caroline Frocker will contribute to the *Woman's Parterre*. The book rights have been secured by Messrs. Bungay. The work will be illustrated with photographs of Miss Frocker in the bonnets, by the artist of *The Bonnet Conspirators*.'

Like Mr. Vincent Crummies, one marvels how these things get into the papers.

ANDREW LANG.

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#### NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*The Editor requests that his correspondents will be good enough to write to him informing him of the subject of any article they wish to offer, before sending the MS. A stamped and addressed envelope should accompany the MS. if the writer wishes it to be returned in case of non-acceptance. The Editor can in no case hold himself responsible for accidental loss. All communications should be addressed to*

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